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K. Killenworth (G.)

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EXAMINATION

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The Rev^d. Dr. JAMES FOSTER's
Sermon on Catholic Communion,

As published in his First Volume

OF DISCOURSES ON

NATURAL RELIGION and SOCIAL VIRTUE.

With an ADDRESS to the Doctor.

Also an APPENDIX in answer to

A late Pamphlet, intituled,

INFANT BAPTISM a Reasonable Service.

The Church does not at all offend in departing from this Institution of *St. Paul*, it being left free to the Church, not only to violate this Institution of *St. Paul*, but also the Institutions of God himself, supposing them to have been once profitable to the Church, but now unprofitable.

HOFFMEST, in defence of Popery.

It is time for thee, Lord, to work : for they have made void thy law. Therefore I love thy commandments above gold; yea above fine gold. Therefore I esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right; and I hate every false way. *Psal. cxix.* 126, 127, 128.

L O N D O N :

Printed for M. COOPER, at the *Globe* in *Parson's*
Nether Row. M D C C L.

[Price 1 s. 6 d.]

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OF
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With an Appendix by the Doctor.



Also an Answer to

A late Pamphlet, intitled,

INSTANT BAPTISM a Reasonable Service.

The Church does not at all offend in departing from the
Instruction of St. Paul, it brings her face to the Church,
not only to resist the Instruction of St. Paul, but also the
Instruction of God himself, supposing them to have been
once profitable to the Church, but now unprofitable.
Hear ye, in defence of Popery.

It is time for them, I say, to work: for they have made void the
law. Therefore let us thy commandments above gold, for
above the gold. Therefore I esteem all thy precepts concerning
all things to be right: and I hate every false way. Psalm cxxxix.
120, 127, 128.

L O N D O N :

Printed for M. COOPER, at the Globe in Pall-mall.
Walter Roper, M.D.C.C.L.

[Price 1s. 6d.]



REVEREND SIR,



AM fully persuaded, that your great popularity, and that high reputation, which you have justly acquired, of an eminent and most acceptable minister, together with your valuable defence of christianity, and the volumes of Sermons you have formerly printed, have so prejudiced mankind in your favour, that every thing, which comes from you, is looked upon, as worthy of their esteem and regard. It may therefore by some be accounted presumption in a layman, openly to differ from you in sentiment; and much more so, if he dares to examine, and publicly answer what you have printed, and sent abroad by subscription. These thoughts, with some other disadvantages I am sensible of, so greatly discouraged me from an attempt of this nature, that nothing but my love of truth, and concern for the *common* cause of *christianity*, could have carried me above them; though, the first time I looked into your *Sermon of Catholic Communion*, the tendency, which it has to prejudice the christian cause, immediately presented itself to my mind.

The whole of what you have urged, in that discourse, seemed to me inconclusive, and to have little or no weight in it; nor have you attempted to answer the arguments, which I know you have read, against the promiscuous communion you plead for. On which account, I thought, the cause of truth demanded, that something should be done to prevent the ill effect, that your Sermon might probably have upon the minds of such christians, who, perhaps, through a fond regard for your character, may overlook the weakness of your pleas. For when they find, that promiscuous communion is openly pleaded for, in the manner you have done, some may be induced to admit unbaptized persons to communion, without authority from Christ; others, who have too little regard for maintaining the purity of the christian religion, may be tempted to leave their own congregations, and join in the Pædo-baptists communion; while others may remain very easy and contented, in a total neglect of the ordinance of baptism: all which must tend to the utter ruin and destruction of those churches, whose present establishment is upon the true plan of the gospel. Now, Sir, as you have furnished me with some suitable arguments against your own pleas, which many others were unacquainted with; so, I think, I must have been inexcuseable, if I had not, according to my ability, made the proper use of them, to serve the best and most glorious cause in the world: and this I have endeavoured to do in the fairest, and most convincing method; not by picking out here and there a passage, or a sentence, as most writers do, but by examining and answering your whole Sermon, paragraph by paragraph, that my readers may at one view see the full force of your arguments, and whether my remarks upon them are, or are not, to the purpose. By this means I hope the fatal consequences, which naturally result from what you recommend, are most likely to be prevented.

It is true, Sir, you have not expressly mentioned baptism any where in your sermon, but have argued against its being made a condition of christian communion in a covert way, and are so far from making one exception with respect to that duty, though it is a plain injunction of Christ upon all his disciples and followers, that you have some passages more particularly pointed against this institution being made such condition of communion, than against any thing else. And I am fully satisfied, that, as your present practice corresponds with those passages, you have too much veracity in you to deny this; though, for some reasons, you did not think fit openly to declare it. As, therefore, I think it of very great consequence to the common cause of christianity, that the church *strictly observe, and inflexibly adhere to the original plan of that institution, which, you say, was wisely calculated by God the supreme lawgiver, to subserve the great purposes of virtue, and the ultimate end of all true religion, intended and adapted to cherish good purposes, and promote a virtuous life*; so you, who are a friend to free enquiry, cannot be at all displeased with what I have here done, in order to rescue that sacred appointment, from the sacrifice you have made of it, in compliance to such, as have too little esteem for positive rites: because, in this examination, I am only seconding your own labours, when you so warmly endeavoured to fix upon the minds of a very numerous assembly, in which were many Pædo-baptist ministers, a just regard to the sacred rite of baptism. For you then told us all, that, ‘ When — any of us, acknowledging the authority of Christ, and the divinity and truth of his religion, live in the omission of any positive duty, which he, in the name of God, and as invested with his supreme authority, has enjoined upon us, we act in such a manner, as is not only absolutely inconsistent with the character we assume, and should think it our honour to bear, of being his disciples, but in a way that is a contradiction

' diction to itself, and to all the natural principles of
 ' reason. For there is no one clearer and more cer-
 ' tain principle of everlasting and unalterable right,
 ' within the whole extent and scope of moral duty,
 ' than this, that the omnipotent creator and sovereign
 ' ruler, whose dominion is unlimited, and who is
 ' perfect in wisdom, and in all moral excellence,
 ' should be revered, honoured, and obeyed in all
 ' his laws, in all the discoveries and declarations of his
 ' will, whether by the voice of nature, or by extra-
 ' ordinary methods of revelation. And in no one
 ' point can there be the least just ground to object,
 ' without supposing that he is a capricious, arbitrary,
 ' tyrannical being, who is not, in the abstract pro-
 ' priety and truth of things, fit to be obeyed; nor,
 ' consequently, without entirely dissolving, together
 ' with every instituted tie, the religion of nature and
 ' reason itself.' *

How great then must the fault of
 that church be, which shall countenance and give en-
 couragement to these very heinous and most fatal
 evils, by not regarding sacred baptism as any condi-
 tion of church membership, but, contrary to the na-
 ture and reason of things, shall carelessly, and with-
 out the least authority from God's word, admit such
 persons, as act after the manner you so justly and
 highly condemn, to the privileges of christian com-
 munion? Or how can you with the least consistency
 advise to it, when you have so frankly acknowledged,
 that baptism ' is an appendage, fence, and help to
 ' true religion, — wisely calculated by God the su-
 ' preme lawgiver to subserve the great purposes of
 ' virtue and the ultimate end of all true religion —
 ' intended and adapted to cherish good purposes, and
 ' promote a virtuous life?' † It must therefore, one
 would think, be esteemed by you, above all men, as
 so necessary, so valuable, and so profitable a branch
 or part of christian duty to collective bodies, as well

as

* My Remarks, p. 2. † Paragraph xiii. Remarks, p. 3. par. v.

as to private christians, that no church can ever lay it aside, or dispense with any of her members obedience to it, without incurring the divine displeasure, and highly affronting that God, whose supreme authority they must thereby so manifestly *annul, oppose, and degrade.*

The cause of truth, Sir, you know, induced me six years ago to print, at large, the Sermon of yours above quoted, though, in such a manner, as not to violate the least tittle of the injunction, which you laid upon me, when you put it into my hands. But, as you did not think fit to conceal from some of your friends the letter I wrote you upon that occasion, and they were forward to talk so much of it in public, that I was told it by others, and sometimes heard them speak of it myself; so this conduct of you and your friends naturally led me to think, that you were very willing to have it known, what parts of that Tract were yours; and therefore I cannot be any longer under the restraint of not *making any references* to you, which I have hitherto inviolably maintained even in conversation: for I never mentioned it to any but to those I consulted about my manuscript: though, I think, your injunction did not debar me from speaking of it to any body, but only in that work, at that time, to avoid references to you in print. However, as I am now considering another Sermon of yours, and as yourself and friends have divulged the secret, I think I may freely make use of it, in order to rectify your own unhappy mistake, correct the error you are fallen into, and prevent the fatal consequences, which may arise from thence. I have therefore openly avowed the whole truth, by printing, at the end of this examination, the letter I sent you with my *Remarks on the several answers to the pamphlet, intitled, Christianity not founded on Argument.*

I then thought it the right of truth to print your whole Sermon, and the same truth now demands my declaring openly whose it was; which, you must own,

is a debt due to the public, from the promises you made to many persons of printing it yourself: and I sincerely wish it may be more and better regarded, as the composition and sentiments of the much celebrated Dr. *Foster*, than as the work of G. K. The sentiments, which it contains, are, I am sure, much more just, the arguments clearer, of greater force, more consistent with truth, and far more likely to advantage true religion and piety, if they be at all attended to, than those are in the Sermon I am going to consider; and yet from the prevailing temper of the age, I greatly fear, that the latter will be more readily received, more freely read, and fondly admired by many, than the former: because discourses, which justly expose that gross superstition, almost universally practised, instead of Christ's institution, set forth the great evil, and very heinous sin of *annulling* or *altering* the laws of God, and so have a natural tendency to reform and bring Christians off from those corruptions, which they derived from *Rome*, suit not the present taste so much as those, which sooth and encourage them to continue such corruptions, till in the end they cast off all regard to the christian cause; an evil which, I apprehend, nothing would more effectually prevent, as nothing can more secure you from the blame of promoting, than your retracting the sentiment in this Sermon, with respect to baptism's being no condition of christian communion, and utterly renouncing the practice you are unhappily fallen into. * * Nor ought the base and slavish principle of public shame, or a sordid secular interest, to have any influence in an affair of such vast importance, as that of preserving an uncorrupted probity of mind, and approving our fidelity to God. They should neither suspend, nor controul and limit, the free scope of our enquiries, nor prevent our renouncing error, however popular and long established; upon a full conviction of the understanding, and making a public profession of the truth,

‘ truth, however despised and loaded with reproach
‘ and ignominy. Such an ingenuous and open con-
‘ duct has something so great, so praise-worthy and
‘ generous in it, that almost all will find themselves
‘ constrained by nature, and the universal ingrafted
‘ sentiment of what is right and excellent, to approve,
‘ what but few have the piety and resolution to imi-
‘ tate.’ And if you, Sir, would put in practice,
upon this occasion, what you have here so worthily
recommended to others ; as you would then act con-
sistently, so it must raise your reputation very high, and
give the greatest pleasure to your most sincere friends
and brethren in the truth ; but to none more than to,

Reverend Sir,

Your most unfeigned Friend,

Christian Brother,

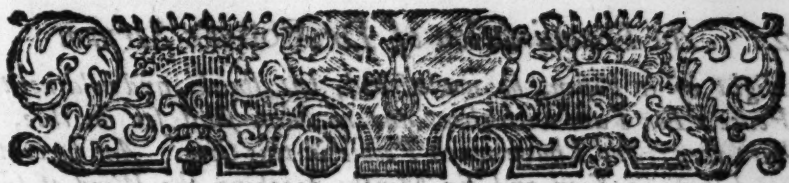
And humble Servant,

*London,
Nov. 5, 1750.*

GRANTHAM KILLINGWORTH.



(2)



A N
EXAMINATION
 O F

The Rev^d. Dr. JAMES FOSTER's
 Sermon on Catholic Communion.

T E X T.

I COR. x. 17.

*For we, being many, are one Bread, and one Body, for we
 are all partakers of that one Bread.*



BEFORE I proceed to consider what Dr.
 F. has offered from this Scripture, I can-
 not but observe, that he is very unhappy
 in the Choice of his Text; which, in-
 stead of being to his purpose, makes di-
 rectly against him: for the Words were
 addressed to a Church, consisting only of
 baptized Believers, and do not in the least relate, as he would
 make his Readers believe, to the whole collective Body of
 Christians, corrupted, as most of them are at present, in their
 Notions of Baptism. And this is very clear, not only from many
 passages of this Epistle, but also from the Account which St. Luke
 has given us of the Way and Means, by which that Church was
 first gathered, Acts xviii. 1—11. The Text says, *Paul departed
 from Athens and came to Corinth—And he reasoned in the Syna-
 gogue every Sabbath, and persuaded the Jews, and the Greeks
 —and testified to the Jews that Jesus was Christ.—And
 Crispus, the chief Ruler of the Synagogue, believed on the Lord,
 with all his house: And many of the Corinthians hearing believ-
 ed, and were baptized. Then spake the Lord to Paul in the*

2 *An Examination of Dr. Foster's Sermon*

Night by a Vision, be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy Peace: For I am with thee, and no Man shall set on thee, to hurt thee: For I have much People in this City. And he continued there a Year and six Months teaching the Word of God among them.

Hence it plainly appears, that the Church of *Corinth* was gathered by *St. Paul's* first preaching the word of God, and then baptizing those, who believed the Doctrine of the Lord, which he preached. And all this the Doctor himself must necessarily allow, because in his Sermon upon Baptism he expressly says, 'That the proper Subjects of Baptism—are only the Adult, upon making a free and voluntary Profession of their Faith in Christ, and Repentance towards God, is, I think, abundantly confirmed by the whole Strain and Current of the New Testament. The Text itself appears to me to afford a manifest and strong demonstration, in which is directly asserted, that as many, *i. e.* all without exception (for *St. Paul* himself does not exclude one single case, and therefore Christians ought not, however necessary it may be to the Support of a favourite Scheme, to which they are most zealously and fondly devoted) in the Text, I say, it is directly asserted, that all without exception, who *are baptized into Christ, do put on Christ*. The Phrase plainly denotes a voluntary Act of their own, an Act of Piety in the Subjects of Baptism.' And a little lower, 'To *put on Christ*, is to take upon us the Christian Character, and to bind ourselves, in a solemn Engagement to imitate the Temper and Life of Christ: As all did, if we may give Credit to *St. Paul*, who were baptized in the first Age of Christianity.' And in the Conclusion he says, 'If the Words of the Institution are either way conclusive, it is, most undoubtedly, on the Side of the perpetual Duration of Baptism, and the universal Extent of its Obligation. And if we consult the Nature and Uses of this Ordinance, we shall find nothing that can lead us to conclude, that it was designed to be only temporary, or to be confined to proselytes: On the contrary, all the Uses of it that are specified in Scripture, and the several Expressions by which the true nature of it is there represented, appear to me to be equally applicable to every Age of the Church, and to all the Believers of Christianity. Take Baptism either as a public Profession of the Christian Religion, by a certain significant Rite, which I take to be, in good part, the Meaning of the Text, that *as many as are baptized into Christ do put on Christ*; or consider it, in *St. Peter's* Notion of it, as the

Answer

‘ Answer of a good Conscience towards God ; or if it be properly described by the modern Stile of a visible Admission into the Christian Church ; I can see no reason, why it may not be as useful to one sort of Christians as to another, nor, consequently, why the Use of it should be limited to professytes only ?—Upon the whole, since there is so great reason to believe, that the Ordinance of Baptism is of Authority and Force in all Ages, and with respect to all Christians ; let us Honour God, by readily submitting to this Law which he hath prescribed. And to those, in particular, who are fully convinced of their Duty, but have hitherto failed in this part of their Obedience, I beg leave to address myself in the Words of *Annianus* to *Saul*, with which I shall conclude this Discourse, *And now why tarriest thou, arise, and be baptized*, and sincerely repenting, *wash away thy Sins, calling on the Name of the Lord* *.’

But I will now give what I take to be the true Import of the Doctor’s Text, and see what farther Light the Epistle itself gives.

The Epistle of *St. Paul*, of which this Text is a Part, was written by him to a Church, which, as I have already shown, was first gathered by his Ministry, chap. iv. 15. planted together according to the Order of the Gospel, Chap. i. 9. Chap. iii. 5—10. So that there was not one unbaptized Person among them, as is very clear from chap. i. 13. chap. vi. 11. chap. xi. 2. where he praises them, because they had kept the Ordinances, as they were at first delivered unto them by himself, having carefully remembered him in all Things. This Text therefore cannot authorise any Church to admit one unbaptized Person, though in other respects ever so devout and good, into their Communion ; nor does it give the least Encouragement for such Person to think, that he may lawfully partake of it. The whole Design and View of the Apostle herein being quite another Thing, namely, to keep the Members of that Church in Peace and Purity, ver. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. to guard them against all the Temptations, to which they might be exposed, ver. 11, 12, 13, and to keep them strict and close to the Christian Profession, and in the Christian Life, ver. 14, 15, 16, 19, 20, 21, 22, 28, 32.

These things he further enforces in the Text, from the spiritual Relation they stood in to Christ Jesus their Head, and to one another as Brethren : For they had every one of them, by Baptism, been incorporated into, and constituted Members of his mystical Body the Church, whereby they acquired

B 2

* Remarks, p. 88, 89, 94, 95.

4 *An Examination of Dr. Foster's Sermon*

quired a Right, and became entitled to the Privilege, of partaking together of that one Bread and Cup, which, as a Pledge of our Lord's Love, mystically represent, or figuratively set forth in the most lively Manner his Passion for us, Gal. iii. 1. and were by him appointed to be eaten and drank in strict Union and Love by his true Disciples as one united Body, in remembrance of his Body broken, and Blood shed for them, Luke xxii. 19, 20. 1 Cor. xi. 23, 24, 25, 26. in order for their spiritual growth and increase in all the Virtues and Graces of the Christian Life, the cherishing true Piety in the Soul, till it rise into a Conformity with Christ, and begetting harmony of Affection, and uniformity of Life in the Truth; like to that one Bread, of which they were all partakers together. In this Sense only the Apostle says in the Text, *We being many, are one Bread, and one Body, for we are all partakers of that one Bread.* So that whatever follows in the Doctor's Discourse for promiscuous mixt Communion of different Sects and Parties of Christians, must of necessity be unsupported by this Text, and can, to the truly considerate, be of no weight at all.

Having thus given what I judge, to be the true Import of the Doctor's Text, I shall set down his own Words, paragraph by paragraph, till I come at the Conclusion. But I must first observe, that as the Doctor's whole Introduction is mere Declamation and flourish of Words, and as such might be placed at the Head of almost any Discourse of a controversial Nature; so it cannot be thought, in the Judgment of sober Reason, to have any great weight in the present Argument: because what is so well suited to serve the Purpose of almost any Declaimer, upon either Side of almost any Question, can't be admitted as a Proof of any Thing, but the Sprightly Genius and warm Imagination of the Writer. However, lest the Glare of Words, and pompous Shew of Expression should captivate our present modish Professors of Christianity, I shall take the Liberty freely to examine every part of it; from whence, I think, it will appear, that the whole of it is the least applicable to the present, of any Subject whatever. The Doctor begins,

I. • Whoever attentively considers the Excellency and Perfection of the Christian Religion, its suitableness to the depraved State of Mankind, and what a direct Tendency the Observation of its Precepts has to promote the true Dignity and Happiness of human Nature, must be deeply concerned, to see the Design of it in so great a Measure defeated, by

• Bi-

‘ Bigotry and Party-Zeal. It must, to a generous Mind,
 ‘ be matter of very uneasy Reflection, that those excellent Rules
 ‘ of Justice, Truth, and Mercy, which are eternal Laws
 ‘ of Nature, and so strongly inculcated by the Gospel, should
 ‘ be infringed and violated for the sake of outward Forms,
 ‘ and insignificant, subtle, confounding Speculations. And
 ‘ it is natural to inquire how it comes to pass, that the Pro-
 ‘ fessors of a Religion, the Genius of which is so mild and
 ‘ amiable, and that breaths nothing but Moderation, Peace
 ‘ and universal Charity, should be so forward to divide into a
 ‘ variety of Sects, reviling and excommunicating one another?
 To this I answer,

One great *Excellency of the Christian Religion* is, that it admits of no Alteration, nor can receive any Addition from human Authority, Gal. i. 6, 7—12: neither is it so destitute of good Order and Discipline, as to leave its peculiar Rights and Privileges common to all Men without distinction, Heb. xiii. 10. But, as it requires from the inward Conviction of the Mind and Understanding, in the Answer of a good Conscience towards God, 1 Pet. iii. 21. obedience to the first Institution of its great Author, appointed by him for an admittance into his Church, in order to constitute pious Persons Members thereof, Baptism being a Rite whereby Christians may know who are, or who are not related to them in the Gospel of Christ; so it also requires Purity, and Holiness of Life and Conversation afterwards.

But what does the Doctor mean by *outward Forms, and insignificant, subtle, confounding Speculations*? Surely he could never think of inspiring his Readers with any such unworthy, reproachful Sentiments of Christ as these, namely, that the Baptism, in which he commanded all his Disciples and Followers to obey him, as the Way of Entrance into his Church, and one of the Conditions of being esteemed his Friends and Disciples is, in itself, an Institution of no greater Consequence to Mankind, notwithstanding the Divine Authority of it, than to be compared, ranked and confounded, with the *outward Forms* of human Device, by which Men *make void the Commandments of God*. Much less should so plain an Ordinance, clearly expressive of what it was designed to hold forth, observed by Christ himself, and required of all his Followers, Matt. xxviii. 19, 20. Mark xvi. 15, 16. John iii. 3, 5. chap. xv. 14. chap. xiv. 23, 24. Acts ii. 38; 41, 42. be compared with the *insignificant, subtle, confounding Speculations*, which the Craft and Pride of some have invented to
 obscure

6 *An Examination of Dr. Foster's Sermon*

obscure the Truth, enslave their Fellow-Christians, perplex their Minds, disturb and destroy the Peace and Harmony of Christian Societies. On the contrary, the Doctor himself has represented Christian Baptism, as an Ordinance of the highest Authority, and of the utmost Importance, both with respect to God and Man. For he says, 'The Ordinance of Baptism is a Duty entirely Christian,——wisely calculated by God the supreme Lawgiver, to subserve the great Purposes of Virtue, and the ultimate End of all true Religion: *That* the Obligation of it results wholly from the Will of God——and therefore a Duty to which a Christian——must yield exact Obedience——on the self-same Principle, on which he thinks it his Duty to conform from Motives of Religion, or Acknowledgement, and suitable Veneration of the supreme Deity, to the eternal and universal Rules of Virtue and Morality. And therefore when any of us, acknowledging the Authority of Christ, and the Divinity and Truth of his Religion, live in the Omission of it,——we act in such a Manner, as is not only absolutely inconsistent with the Character we assume——but *also* in a Way that is a Contradiction to itself, and to all the natural Principles of Reason.' That Christians are under the strongest Ties and Obligations of Obedience to it, in every particular Circumstance, and that their living in the Omission of it is attended with the most fatal Consequences imaginable, farther appears from his own Words; for he adds, 'And in no one Point can there be the least just ground to object, without supposing that he (God) is a capricious, arbitrary, tyrannical Being, who is not in the abstract Propriety, and truth of Things, fit to be obeyed, nor, consequently, without dissolving, together with every instituted Tie, the Religion of Nature and Reason itself*.'

As this is the Sentiment, and these the Words of Dr. F. in the Sermon, which he preached upon Baptism, when that sacred Ordinance was administered to two Persons, before a vast multitude of Spectators, of all Denominations in Religion: so it becomes him, and is his Duty, as much as it is any Christian Minister's, to support and maintain, to the utmost of his Power, a strict Regard, and universal Obedience, to this divine Institution, among all his Followers, and throughout the whole Circle of his Acquaintance. If he neglects this, he must be highly inexcusable; but much more so, if he at any Time, or in any Manner, knowingly, advances Principles or Sentiments, which tend to lessen the Regard of Mankind, of benevolent and virtuous men to this sacred ordinance and

* Remarks, p. 2, 3.

and hinder their Obedience to the Ordinances of Baptism, which was instituted by the Son of God, to be observed by every Believer in him, for the wisest and best Ends and Purposes.

And if *the Observation of Christ's Precepts has a direct Tendency to promote the true Dignity and Happiness of human Nature*, as the Doctor here allows; and according to St. Paul, Baptism, in particular, has this tendency, Rom. vi. 1—23. then, should the Church receive Persons to Membership and Communion, without this tie to Holiness and Purity of Life, to which the Pardon of past Sins, and the Assistance of the Holy Ghost are promised; they would do the greatest Injury to such persons in particular, besides what they must do to themselves, by the Dishonour thereby done to Christ their Lord, who instituted it for the wisest and best Purposes. And indeed the strict Observation of this Institution, with all the other Laws and Precepts of Christ in conjunction with it, and each other, are *so suitably adapted to the depraved state of Mankind*, that they must then, if at all surely, have a *direct Tendency to promote the true Dignity and Happiness of human Nature*, to bind them to the Practice of Piety, Virtue and Humanity, and to joyn them together in Fellowship and Communion, by the firmest and most endearing Bond of Union, namely, love to God, to Christ, and one another.

And that Christianity had this happy Effect upon the Professors of it in general, was clearly manifested, whilst the Church *inflexibly adhered* to the Order of the Gospel in the Admission of Members into her Community. The cruel Sufferings, which they endured for their Faithfulness to the Truth they professed, were a Proof of the first; and the Acknowledgment of their Persecutors was an Evidence of the latter; for *see how the Christians love one another*, was one Remark of their bitterest Enemies. The Disorders, Schisms, and Confusion of *Sects, reviling, persecuting, and excommunicating each other*, which has since ensued, may justly therefore be ascribed to the *annulling, and degrading the Authority of God*, by introducing human Forms, the corrupt Inventions of Men, instead of the pure Institution of Christ, as appointed for the Admission of Persons to Membership in his Church. For where such a Breach is once made, it is a certain inlet to every other Evil. And this, I believe, was, in fact, the Occasion of the first considerable Breach or Schism in the Christian Church, which happened in the Time of *Cyprian and Cornelius*, when Infant Baptism first began to come in; and was, like a root Sin, the Foundation of great Apostacy

stacy from the Purity and Simplicity of the Gospel, by one Corruption and Deviation after another, from the true primitive Christian Principles, and Christian Practice, till, in the End, it brought in all that execrable Wickedness, recounted by the Doctor, p. 342. And as those shocking Evils followed the Corruption of sacred Baptism, by applying it to unfit Subjects; so the laying that Institution of Christ's wholly aside, as a trifling, unnecessary Ceremony, must naturally tend, not only to defeat the great Design of Christianity; but also to extirpate the Whole of his most holy, and most excellent Religion: which, I presume, Dr. F. would be extremely sorry to see take its rise, or find Encouragement from what he has here published. He proceeds,

II. ' In some, this seems to be occasioned by Prejudices of Education. They have been taught, that particular Schemes are the Substance of Christianity; fundamental Truths, upon a Belief, or Disbelief, of which, their eternal Happiness or Misery depend; and, in consequence of this, they are not only tenacious of them, and averse to a free and impartial Inquiry; but apt to entertain hard Thoughts of those, who have not, exactly, the same Sentiments of Religion with themselves. In others, it may proceed from selfishness, and a regard to private Interest; which makes them condemn particular Opinions, and the Abettors of them, as infamous, to secure their Popularity and Influence.— In others, again, it may spring from Pride, a fruitful Root of Contention, and the Cause of numberless Irregularities and Discords. Any one, indeed, who is acquainted with the Powers of human Nature, the Influence of our Passions, and the many Prejudices to which we are subject (some of which are visible, whilst others insensibly, but at the same time altogether as effectually, bias and captivate the Mind) such a one, I say, would scarce believe, that so great a Part of Mankind should have that extravagant Veneration for their own Judgments, as to set them up for a kind of Standard, or Test of Truth. However, so it is in fact: they do not pretend to be infallible, and yet are never in the wrong; and if you refuse to pay them the Compliment of submitting to their wiser opinions, they seem to think themselves, and Religion too, to be insulted and degraded; and come to this peevish conclusion, that if you will not take your Notions of Christianity from them, you shall not be allowed to be Christians at all. Thus, which is indeed very strange and unnatural, their Vanity, which is really inconsistent with all Religion,

prompts

‘ prompts them to look upon themselves, and those of the
 ‘ same Name and Distinction, as the only true Christians;
 ‘ and they are apt to say to others, however honest and con-
 ‘ scientious, in the Spirit of a conceited and boasting Pharisee
 ‘ —Stand off, come not near, for we are holier than you.’

If through the *Prejudices of Education, Selfishness, and a
 Regard for private Interest, or from Pride, the fruitful Root
 of Contention, and cause of numberless Irregularities and Dis-
 cords*, many have *set up their own Judgments and Inventions*
as the Standard and Test of Truth; and have therefore refused
to allow the Name of Christians to any, who dissent from their
Opinions, of which they are so fondly tenacious, as to shew
themselves averse to a free and impartial Inquiry; does it at
 all follow, that the Character of true Christians may not be
 justly appropriated to those only, *who have respect unto all*
Christ's Commandments, and, as a Body or Community of
 People, are known to practise, as far as in them lies, *what-*
soever Christ has commanded? Or must the high and honour-
 able Character of true Christians, equally belong to other
 Societies, which not only refuse Obedience to Christ in some
 very material Things, but, instead thereof, follow the cor-
 rupt Traditions of Men in opposition to the Institution of our
 Lord, whom they therein dishonour: and have too often, not
 only despised, but even injured those, who from a conscientious
 Regard to the Institutions of the Gospel, durst not ac-
 knowledge, or allow their human Ceremonies for true Chri-
 stianity? And if the Title of true Christians, or the true
 Church of Christ, is due, and ought to be allowed to such
 Societies, why should it be denied to the corrupt apostate
 Church of Rome? But is it not a Protestant Principle, readi-
 ly acknowledged by all, that *no Man is a Christian any far-*
ther than he is a Follower of Christ, and becomes obedient to
him; and that when he practises something else, instead of
 what Christ appointed, he is therein so far from being a true
 Christian, that *he becomes the Disciple of some other, whom he*
chooses to follow; and is not in that particular a Disciple of
 Christ Jesus the Lord? And surely we are not to think Right
 and Wrong, Truth and Error in Religion, of equal Autho-
 rity; or that they are so blended and confounded together in
 every Thing, that it is very difficult, if not impossible, right-
 ly to distinguish the one from the other in any thing. And
 is Dr. F. after all his study, arrived no farther; or can
 he think such Apprehensions, will ever recommend a free
 Inquiry after Truth? On the contrary, may we not boldly
 refuse

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refuse to acknowledge that for true, which we know to be false, without *pretending to be infallible*, or incurring the least Imputation of a *conceited boasting pharisaical spirit*, or so much as thinking of others in any such sense, or *stand off, come not near, for we are holier than you*? This is a Spirit, which I well hope does not belong to the General Baptists. But here let me ask the Doctor, whether there are not Persons in his own way of Thinking in this particular, who though *they do not pretend to be infallible*, yet say *they are sure they are not in the Wrong*, and who really entertain hard Thoughts of those, who have not exactly the same Sentiments of Religion with themselves? Let him think seriously, and speak freely, whether he never heard, that his Church has been represented, or said to be, *the only true catholic Church in London*; and whether the Members thereof have not sometimes made this their boast: owing not to their *strictly observing, and inflexibly adhering* to the Institutions of Christ, but to their great Indifference, and that very little Regard, which, as a Church, they pay to the Ordinance of Baptism, which the Gospel has appointed, and directly contrary to what the Doctor himself has expressly asserted, no Christian * can 'live in the Omission of——without entirely dissolving, together with every instituted tie, the Religion of Nature, and Reason itself.' And if these are facts, whether the Doctor's Words are not as applicable to *them*, as to any other Christians, whose *Vanity, which is really inconsistent with all Religion, prompts them to look upon themselves, and those of the same Name and Distinction, as the only true Christians*, and with a kind of sovereign Contempt are apt to say to others, *however honest and conscientious, in the Spirit of a conceited boasting Pharisee——We are holier than you.* Whereas, though we think ourselves obliged in faithfulness to Christ, to separate from the corrupt Traditions and Inventions of Men, which other Christians practise, instead of our Lord's Institution; and to keep more close and strictly to the Gospel Rule in what respects the Constitution of his Church; it does not at all follow, that we must think the prevailing Temper and Disposition of our Minds more holy; that is, more like the Temper and Life of Christ, in other respects, than those Christians, who differ from us. Nay, is it not very possible, for a Man to be in the Profession of the Truth, and to think himself obliged to adhere closely to it, and maintain it strictly too, and yet not think himself perfect; yea, to know himself so faulty in some Things, as to grieve and mourn for them, and yet his departing from, or giving up the Truth he knows, or growing indif-

* My Remarks, p. 2.

ferent to it, in order to please and gratify others, or from any other bad motive, would but increase his guilt? However, as Dr. F. so much disclaims and censures a pharisaical Spirit, I can have no fear, that he will *think* either himself or Religion insulted and degraded, because I am so far from paying him the compliment of submitting to his Opinion, as to publish this Examination in answer to him: though there would have been no room for this, nor any controversy of this nature; if Christians had not departed from the foundation Principle of the doctrine of Christ, which Christ himself established, as the entrance into his church. For had Christians always kept the Ordinances as St. Paul delivered them to the *Corinthians*, they would then have been all baptized Christians to this day; but as many have departed from, and laid aside the institution of Baptism, we are not to follow them in their apostacy, nor countenance them at all in it, least we should be partakers with them in those evil deeds. And I shall shew from Dr. F.'s own words, that the alterations, which our Pædobaptist brethren have made in that institution, are with him equally sinful and heinous, and therefore instead of complying with them in their corrupt superstition, it is rather our duty seriously to consider and apply what the most beloved apostle of our Lord says, second of *John*, ver. 4, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11.

Moreover that Dr. F. thinks Pædobaptism directly contrary to, and utterly inconsistent with the Gospel accounts of the sacred institution of Baptism; and that he also entertains the most contemptible opinion of the pretences and pleas, which our Pædobaptists make use of for the support of their practice, is most evident and plain in the following passages which I have here transcribed from his Sermon upon Baptism; where after stating his three heads of inquiry, he enters upon the proof in these words *.

‘As there is a great compass and variety of argument included under each of these heads, I must content myself with giving short sketches, without expatiating on every particular; but hope however, though in an abstract, to give obvious and convincing reasons on the side of what I apprehend to be the truth, and a clear confutation of all opposite pretences.

‘In the first place, what are we to understand by the expression used in the text, of *being baptized into Christ*? The general sense is most evidently this, that we are baptized into the solemn profession and acknowledgment of his religion,

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of that most wise, and holy, and excellent scheme of religion, which he was commissioned by God to reveal and publish, and enabled to confirm and establish by many unquestionable, great, and beneficent miracles: just as the Jews being baptized into *Moses* implied in it, in the sentiment of *St. Paul*, who made use of that phrase, their owning him as their leader, and his institution to be divine. Thus far the matter seems to be perfectly unperplexed and free from difficulty, &c. To the second head,

Who are the proper subjects of baptism, and that they are only the adult, upon their making a free and voluntary profession of their faith in Christ, and repentance towards God, is, I think, abundantly confirmed by the whole strain and current of the New Testament. The text itself appears to me to afford a manifest and strong demonstration, in which is directly asserted, that *as many*, that is, all without exception; (for *St. Paul* himself does not exclude one single case, and therefore Christians ought not; however necessary it may be to the support of a favourite scheme, to which they are most zealously and fondly devoted;) in the text, I say, it is directly asserted, that all without exception, *who are baptized into Christ, do put on Christ*. The phrase plainly denotes a voluntary act of their own, an act of piety in the subjects of baptism, and not a forced tie, not a mere external and mechanical operation; and consequently infants are plainly declared, by this passage, to be incapable of baptism, (if we proceed rightly, according to the christian rule,) because they are incapable of reason, and faith, and free determination. And this interpretation the same apostle has confirmed beyond all contradiction in another place, where he opposes *putting on the Lord Jesus Christ to making provision for the flesh*, representing both as actions equally voluntary, and that relate to a moral character. As *to put on the new man* is explained by *being renewed in the spirit of our mind*; so *to put on Christ* is to take upon us the christian character, and to bind ourselves, in a solemn engagement, to imitate the temper and life of Christ; as all did, if we may give credit to *St. Paul*, who were baptized in the first age of Christianity, but infants cannot possibly do; and therefore the baptizing such can be regarded in no other light than that of an innovation, absolutely unknown in the apostolical times. And indeed, if we examine the commission itself, which our Lord gave the apostles to baptize, this error of modern Christianity will appear in as full and distinct a view. The commission runs thus, *Go ye there-*

‘ therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them, &c. where it
 ‘ is obvious to observe, that the stated order is, First, to teach,
 ‘ and then to baptize.—But I must only suggest hints; and
 ‘ therefore proceed to mention some other texts, which unde-
 ‘ niably prove, that the practice of the apostles was strictly
 ‘ conformable to the rule established by their great Lord and
 ‘ master.

‘ Thus, when by St. *Peter*’s first sermon the people, who
 ‘ heard him, were convinced of the sin and infinite danger of
 ‘ their unbelief and stubborn contempt of the gospel, and said
 ‘ to him, and to the rest of the apostles, *Men and brethren,*
 ‘ *what shall we do?* His answer was, *Repent, and be baptized*
 ‘ *every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission*
 ‘ *of sins.* And it is afterwards added, *then they that gladly*
 ‘ *received his word, were baptized.* In like manner, when
 ‘ the Eunuch, upon a firm persuasion of the truth of Christi-
 ‘ anity, desired to be admitted to baptism, *Philip* laid before
 ‘ him the necessary and unalterable condition of his receiving
 ‘ that privilege, in these words, *If thou believest with all thine*
 ‘ *heart, thou mayest.* And to suppose, that there are two
 ‘ sorts of qualifications for one and the same ordinance, when
 ‘ no distinction at all is once intimated in any single passage
 ‘ of the New Testament; nay, to imagine that the qualifica-
 ‘ tions are equally valid, which are as different from each
 ‘ other, as faith, and no faith; or, which amounts to the
 ‘ same, as knowledge and ignorance, a voluntary profession
 ‘ of Christianity, and the being capable of no religion at all;
 ‘ this is not only framing an arbitrary scheme, but, in my
 ‘ opinion, an absolutely incoherent and incredible scheme.
 ‘ The nature and ends of baptism as administered to believers,
 ‘ and the nature and ends of it, if it be administered to such
 ‘ as cannot believe, must certainly be as different, as those of
 ‘ any two different ordinances, that we can possibly conceive
 ‘ of. But the nature and uses of christian baptism are always
 ‘ described in one uniform strain, suited to the case of adult
 ‘ believers only, and impossible by any force or stretch of in-
 ‘ vention, to be adapted to the state of infants. Upon the
 ‘ whole then, as it is generally acknowledged, that there is no
 ‘ express command for baptizing infants, nor a single prece-
 ‘ dent to be found in favour of it, throughout the whole New
 ‘ Testament; so neither is there the least, most obscure, in-
 ‘ volved, and distant hint, that it had ever been practised, or
 ‘ was in itself allowable. The commission, the examples,
 ‘ the descriptions and accounts relating to baptism, are con-
 ‘ fined to quite different subjects, and absolutely discourage all
 ‘ such

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such pretensions. Upon what foot then, it may be asked, can a custom, of which there are no traces in the religion of Christ, and which seems, indeed, to be quite alien from the genius and complexion of it, as a rational and moral institution; upon what foot, I say, can this custom be defended, by so many upright, and, in other respects, judicious Christians, who profess to take the gospel for the only rule of christian order and worship?

I answer, that our brethren themselves are not rightly and thoroughly agreed upon the fundamental principle, on which to raise and establish their scheme.' Then he very judiciously examines and confutes the chief arguments that are urged for the support of infant baptism. First of the pretended *Abrahamic* covenant of grace, which, he says, 'is a foundation much too weak to uphold the superstructure that has been erected upon it, and a principle clogged with heavy and unsurmountable difficulties.' And his second particular concerning circumcision concludes thus.

So that the whole of this plea for infants is a heap of confusion and inconsistency; and all the warm and pathetic exclamations, that are so often mixed with it, are mere dismal sounds, that have no energy in them, can never convince the truly considerate and divested of all prejudice, nor answer any valuable purpose. Infants are as safe, their privileges as entire, and their state as good, upon this principle, without baptism, as with it; as that of one half of the *Jewish* nation was without circumcision. Why then should they be forced, without their consent, to undergo what is called the ordinance of baptism, without any encouragement from, and against the plain rules and examples of, the New Testament?' His fourth particular runs thus,

Finally, and to dismiss this topic, that circumcision could not belong to the covenant of grace, or to the gospel preached to *Abraham*, is manifest, even to a demonstration, from what *St. Paul* has so strenuously asserted, and copiously argued, in his epistle to the *Galatians*; where he refers it entirely to what, in the language of school-divinity, is styled the covenant of works, according to the strict tenor of which, no man could reasonably hope for salvation. If, says this great apostle, ye be circumcised, ye become debtors to the whole law, (which law ran in this fearful, rigid strain, Cursed is every one, that continueth not in all things, which are written in the book of the law, to do them.) Christ is of no effect unto you; Christ will profit you nothing, and ye are fallen from grace. By these, it is likely, and other confutations

derations of a like nature, several of our Pædobaptist brethren have been so struck and convinced, that they have deserted the old foundation, and built upon a new one; and that is, the custom of baptizing proselytes and their children, in use, (as they say,) before our Saviour's coming; amongst the *Jews*, and which he intended his disciples should imitate. To which I shall only say, that if this be a good argument for infant-baptism, it must hold equally strong for baptizing none but proselytes and their children. Secondly, that our Lord, by instituting baptism only for disciples instructed and believing, has plainly discovered; that he intended different subjects of baptism from those, which this argument pretends the *Jews* admitted. And, Thirdly, that there is no ground in history for supposing; that the *Jews* had any such established custom in the ancient times here supposed. The Old Testament is absolutely silent about it; so is the Apocrypha, so is the New Testament, so are *Josephus* and *Philo*, grave and credible historians, who professedly treat of the antiquities and ceremonies of the *Jews*. *Josephus*, in relating two cases of proselytism, mentions circumcision only, and gives not the least intimation about a baptism. The most early christian writers appear to have had no knowledge of it. *St. Paul*, for a prelude to christian baptism, fixes on the *Israelites* being baptized in the cloud, and in the sea, instead of hinting at this *Jewish* baptism; which, if it was really the model of that appointed by Christ, he had the fairest opportunity in the world of introducing some account of, and could scarce have failed to introduce. Upon what ground then, it may be asked, have learned men advanced and propagated a notion, that seems so little credible? I answer, upon the bare authority of Talmudical books, not composed till about three hundred years after Christ, and stuffed with blasphemies, full of stupid insatiation and wild romance, and upon whose credit, if it was not invalidated by what has been already offered, no man, who wishes not to be imposed upon, would ever rely. And are these principles, from which to deduce duties of religion, on which to found positive institutions of God? If *Jewish* legends are to be the ground-work of christian duties, the whole face of the Gospel may in time be so mangled, and disfigured, as to bear nothing at all of the aspect of primitive and unadulterate Christianity. After all this he proves the perpetuity of baptism, and then concludes his sermon thus,

Upon

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‘ Upon the whole, since there is so great reason to believe, that the ordinance of baptism is of authority and force in all ages, and with respect to all Christians; let us honour God, by readily submitting to this law, which he hath prescribed. And to those, in particular, who are fully convinced of their duty, but have hitherto failed in this part of their obedience, I beg leave to address myself in the words of *Ananias* to *Saul*, with which I shall conclude this discourse. And now why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and [sincerely repenting] wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.’

These passages clearly shew, how mean and contemptible the Doctor thinks all the pleas are, which our Pædobaptists make use of for the support of their practice: and that he looks upon it as a thing directly contrary to, and utterly inconsistent with the Gospel accounts of the sacred institution of baptism, which I wish my readers may bare in mind, whilst they review in this examination, each paragraph of his sermon on Catholic Communion. He proceeds to the three heads of his discourse as follows.

III. ‘ In opposition to such narrow principles, it is my design, from these words of *St. Paul*, to recommend the great duty of extensive christian charity, and catholic communion; a subject, which the condition of the christian church has, in every age, rendered seasonable, and which is, withal, of the utmost importance. For if all christians could be persuaded, to consider themselves as members of the same society, intitled to the same privileges, and having the same hope of their calling; it must, of course, promote mutual esteem, concord, and harmony, and make them regard one another, according to their real merit: by which means, impositions on conscience, violent controverlies, unscriptural terms of communion, schisms, persecutions, &c, (which have been of fatal consequence to religion, and civil society) would be intirely prevented. I shall reduce, what I have to offer, to the three following heads.

‘ First, that all, who truly belong to the *body of Christ*, have a right to the privilege of *christian communion*. And therefore,

‘ Secondly, that nothing should be required, in order to communion, but what is absolutely necessary to denominate a man a *christian*. And

‘ In the Third place, that this universal brotherly communion of all good christians, notwithstanding lesser differences,

‘ as

‘as it best answers the end of the Institution of the holy supper, is, also, the most effectual way to advance the honour, and interest of true Christianity.’

These three Heads will be considered in their proper places with the proposed proofs of them: but to the above paragraph, I reply.

How laudable soever it may be in any man, *to recommend the great duty of extensive christian charity and catholic communion*; yet, in every attempt of that kind, we ought all to be extremely careful, that we do no injury to the christian cause, but on the contrary, *strictly and inflexibly adhere* to that which is honest, and may appear consonant to the word of truth, which is our rule, and must not be departed from for the sake of indulging any in their superstitious errors, or in their wilful neglect of that institution of Christ, which alone can give them a right and title to christian communion. The Church therefore *inflexibly adhering* to Christ’s own words, John iii. 3—5. that *Except a man be born of water, and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God*, as the church of Christ is frequently styled in scripture; must not be thought *narrow in her principles*, or deemed to lay any *imposition upon Conscience*, or with the least truth or justice be thought to require *unscriptural terms of communion*. On the contrary, what the Doctor recommends may properly be called unscriptural: for to make the Lord’s Supper common to all, by admitting any of the unbaptized to communicate, is truly so. But there seems to be no *terms of communion* at all in the Doctor’s new Scheme. That I have here given the just and true sense of our Saviour’s words, John iii. 3. 5. is, I think, proved beyond contradiction, in the first Letter at the end of my Remarks on the several answers to the Pamphlet intitled Christianity not founded upon Argument. To that therefore I refer all my readers, who have the least doubt in their minds about it. But farther, on this subject, I shall here transcribe the last letter there printed; which, I apprehend, is directly to the point in hand. And indeed from the practice and writings of the holy Apostles, of the primitive christians, and their successors down to the present times, it is undeniably certain; that baptism was always thought the initiating ordinance, or way of entrance into the christian church; that, which gave a right to christian communion, and entitled a believer to all the privileges of christian fellowship. The letter is as follows:

D

Reverend

Reverend Sir,

TH E conceit, which you mentioned to me in our last conversation, as the opinion of the Rev. Mr. J. T. that *all persons become members of the church of Christ, as soon as they believe in Christ, or are persuaded in their minds, that the christian revelation is from God; tho' they never were obedient to any institution of Christ,* hath something in it so very wild and romantic, that, upon this supposition, baptism would soon be laid aside; and it must be impossible for the church of Christ to maintain any order or discipline, or indeed to know who are, or who are not related to them, in the gospel of Christ. For, if there is no initiatory rite to be observed, whereby believers are to be constituted members of his visible church, can they be at all accountable to any church for their conversation? Or is it possible, even for gross immoralities, to cast those out of the church, who have never been received into it by any rite? At this rate, tho' a man walks ever so disorderly, yet if he says he believes the christian institution, he may still think himself a member of the visible church of Christ, whether others will own him, or not, and who then can pretend to say he is not? This notion therefore, as it gives some encouragement to licentiousness, it seems also to be an inlet to disorder and confusion, and would render it almost impossible to describe, what a visible church of Christ is.

But as we were both agreed, that *baptism is an introductory ordinance*, I thought my arguments from *John iii. 5.* sufficient to take off the force of your objection. Nor did I imagine, that by your giving up the very foundation of your own objection, I should have any further occasion to shew, that baptism is the initiating ordinance, by which believers are to be taken into the church of Christ: but that it is so, I think, is evident enough from the following scriptures.

Acts ii. 41. Then they that gladly received his word, were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them, [the church consisting of an hundred and twenty men and women] about three thousand souls. Is it not the plain, obvious sense of this place, that those three thousand believers, who gladly received the gospel preached by St. Peter, were thereupon initiated into the church by baptism; and being by this ordinance constituted members of the church of Christ, were admitted to all the privileges and benefits of the same? For it

it is said, ver. 42. *They continue stedfastly in the apostles doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.* After which we read, that the Lord wrought so powerfully upon the hearts of the people, by the wonders and signs—done by the apostles, and by their daily preaching in the temple, that there were added to the church daily such as should be saved. ver. 43, 47. And how this was done, we are fully informed in the 41st verse, as hath been observed.

We have also a like expression with this, *Acts v. 14. And believers were the more added to the Lord,* [or to the church, which is his body] *multitudes both of men and women.* I observe here, that those persons were believers, before they were added to the church; and because they were believers, something was done, whereby they were added to the Lord. And that this was baptism is sufficiently plain, from *Acts ii. 38, 41.* But if a bare believing in Christ, or a declaration, that they believed the christian religion was from God, added them to his visible church; or was sufficient of itself to constitute them members thereof, without their being baptized, St. Luke would hardly have expressed himself in such terms, as plainly shew, that believing, and being added to the church, were two distinct things; so that the former was only a qualification for the latter. The context in this place likewise plainly shews, according to *Grotius* and *Beza*, as Dr. *Whitby* observes, that there were many believers, who magnified the apostles, but durst not join themselves to, or associate with them as members, because they were not yet of the church.

I mentioned to you what the apostle says, *Rom. vi. 5.* of Christians in his time being *planted together in the likeness of Christ's death*; thereby alluding to baptism, as the way by which they were constituted members of his visible church. Nor can any thing less be understood by their *being baptized into Jesus Christ*, ver. 3. or into the church, which is his body. But a word to the wise is sufficient; and therefore I will only add, that the remarkable passage of the same apostle, which informs us, that the way, by which a believer puts on Christ, or takes upon him the profession of his religion, is by being BAPTIZED INTO CHRIST. *For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ,* Gal. iii. 26, 27. And I can assure you, it would be the greatest rejoicing to me, and many other members of the true visible church of Christ, to see or hear this of you; but it would be more abundantly to your own joy and com-

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fort, which that you may experience, as the Eunuch did, *Acts* viii. 39. is the fervent prayer of,

Dear S I R, &c.

But to return to Dr. F—s paragraph.

If the churches steadfastness to the truth, and institutions of Christ, by refusing the Communion to unbaptized Persons should, through the *prejudices, selfishness or pride of others*, bring upon her *violent controversies, schisms, and persecutions* from *them*, such trials may purge her members, and increase their future glory: but the evil will lie wholly upon those, who though, they profess to believe in Christ, yet refuse to pay him that honour, and yield that obedience to his institutions, which she herself is careful to observe; though she suffer reproach and derision, or even worse persecutions from *them* for it. For as the great apostle St. Paul says, *we can, that is we ought not, or cannot lawfully, do any thing against the truth but for the truth.* And as he has denounced the most severe *anathema* against every man, *who preaches any other doctrine, or perverts the gospel, which he himself once preached to the Churches*, Gal. i. 6. 7—12: so Dr. F, as well as others, should be afraid to set up his own reasoning in opposition to it.

‘ IV. The first thing, says the Doctor, that I proposed to prove, was, that all, who truly belong to the body of Christ, have a right to the privilege of christian communion. This is plainly implied in these words of the Apostle: For we, being many, are one bread, and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread—The obvious sense of which passage is, that one great design of appointing this social branch of christian worship, eating bread and drinking wine together, in remembrance of Christ as our Saviour, was to be a publick evidence and testimony, that we belong to his spiritual body; and that none ought to be debarred from partaking of that ordinance, to whom this character justly belongs. For if all, who joyn in this holy communion, are thereby declared to be members of the one body of Christ, we naturally infer from hence, that no other qualification is necessary, than that they really belong to his body; that we, in effect, deny this of all without exception, whom we take upon us to exclude from christian communion; and that such exclusion can, on no other principle be justified.—This, then, being

‘ being the plain doctrine of St. Paul, we shall be much
 ‘ safer in acting agreeably to it; than we can be, if we pro-
 ‘ ceed on precarious and conjectural conclusions of our own,
 ‘ not warranted, and supported by the New Testament.’

This first head is readily allowed, *That all, who truly be-
 long to the body of Christ, have a right to the privilege of
 christian communion.* But it cannot follow from hence, that
 such, as only erroneously practice something else instead of
 what Christ appointed, for the constituting believers members
 of his church, and so pretend from thence to be of Christ’s
 body, have the same right to the privilege of Christian com-
 munion. Christ himself has excluded all such, John iii. 5.
 where he most solemnly affirms, that, *Except a man be born
 of water and of the spirit he cannot enter into his church;* and
 has moreover declared, Luke vi. 46. John xv. 14. that he
 approves none as his true disciples, *who do not the things which
 he says;* and has plainly signified, that he will not look upon
 any as such, who have not a *respect unto all his commandments.*
 See also John xiv. 23, 24. And as Baptism is that high
 command of his, that outward and visible act, which enti-
 tles to the privileges of his Church, and which obliges all his
 true disciples to observe and do *whatever else* he then gave in
 charge to his Apostles; so the Lord’s Supper is one of those
 commands; the standing ordinance of his church, to be
 observed or partaken of by none, but Disciples first baptized
 upon profession of repentance and faith. For Christ in the
 latter part of the commission, Matt. xxviii. 20, seems to have
 such persons particularly in his view; and therefore the word
 teach in the preceding verse means only to publish, or preach,
 among all nations of men, the glad tidings of peace and salva-
 tion by the gospel of Christ, unto all those who believe, and
 then put on Christ, or make a publick profession that they
 receive and own him for their Lord, by being baptized into
 Christ; and so becoming members of his body or church,
 in his own appointed way, and thereby, obliging themselves
 to keep all his other commands, or in the words of the learn-
 ed Dr. Whitby, *To preach the gospel to all nations, and to
 engage them to believe it, in order to the profession of that faith
 by baptism.* And the subsequent words of the commission,
*teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have command-
 ed you,* are plainly limited and restrained to them only, who
 become obedient to Christ, by being baptized into him, upon
 their believing the first teaching: and therefore in all just and
 fair reasoning, every unbaptized person is clearly and plainly
 excluded

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excluded from, and prohibited partaking of the Lord's Supper by Christ himself. But all others are so far from being debarred, that they are hereby commanded to partake of it, as they *justly, truly, and really belong to his mystical body*. And that none can have a *just, true, or real claim* to that spiritual relation, without being baptized into him, in his own appointed way, has been clearly proved. *This then being the plain doctrine of Christ and his Apostles, we shall be much safer in acting agreeably to it, by refusing to admit unbaptized persons to communion, without the least authority from them, than we can possibly be, if we proceed on precarious and conjectural conclusions of our own, not warranted and supported by the New Testament*: for such are all the Doctor's pleas for their admission.

Moreover he says that *one great design of appointing this social branch of christian worship, eating bread and drinking wine together, in remembrance of Christ as our Saviour, was to be a public evidence and testimony, that we belong to his spiritual body*. And therefore it is not that act, which brings us into such spiritual relation with him; because, as the Doctor says, it is *a public evidence and testimony, that we belong to his spiritual body*, or have been constituted members thereof by the proper rite, which Christ himself appointed for that end. For which reason the Doctor's scheme is without rule or order: he having given us none, whereby we are to know how or which way it is, that professors belong to Christ's *spiritual body*; there being no other appointed for constituting them members thereof. And the word *many* in his text most properly means, that the many members of the same Church are *one bread, and one body*; as they are all partakers of one and the same bread, and incorporated into one society: and not absurdly, that many different Sects, and contrary parties of Christians, who never communed together are *one bread and one body*; for the text as plainly declares the many Persons there understood to be as much *one bread* by their partaking of the same Lump, as *one body* by their being baptized into Christ; and so constituted one Society or Church in the same way. Nor was there in the Apostles times any such contrary parties of Pædo-baptists, as now exist, but the whole body of Christians were then esteemed one sect. Acts xxiv.

5. The Doctor proceeds

V. 'And to render the interpretation, which I have given, more probable, let it be considered, that it is very much confirmed by the reason of the thing itself; which, in every

every view of it, pleads strongly for thus enlarging the foundation, on which Christian societies are to be formed, and disclaims all more restrained and private views. For all, who are true members of Christ's body, the church, will, without doubt, be allowed to be under indispensable obligations, to obey every express command of Christ, which they acknowledge as such; notwithstanding the error of their judgement, even in points of consequence: Or, else, we must suppose, that an involuntary mistake, in some instances, will be admitted as a plea for wilful disobedience, or hinder our serving God acceptably, in others — Neither of which can, I think, be asserted, without entertaining very unworthy notions of the wisdom and goodness of the supreme governor of men, and undermining the foundation of all religious obedience. And if, as is the case upon the christian scheme, there are but two positive institutions, BOTH OF WHICH ARE INTENDED AND ADAPTED TO CHERISH GOOD PURPOSES, AND PROMOTE A VIRTUOUS LIFE; he, who by wrong sentiments consistent with general integrity, is deprived of the useful influence of the one, has, in reason, the more need of the assistance of the other, to strengthen right dispositions in his mind, and carry his habits of piety to a higher degree of perfection.'

And to render the interpretation, which I have given of the Doctor's text in the beginning, or elsewhere, still more weighty, let it be considered, that it is very much confirmed by the reason of the thing itself; which in every view of it, pleads strongly for thus keeping inviolable the foundation, on which christian societies are to be formed, and which disclaims all licentious liberty and private views. For all, who are true members of Christ's body, the church, were, at their baptism, laid under indispensable obligations to obey every express command of Christ: whose commands no person in the world can be under so high and strong obligation to perform, till they have entered into Covenant, and been baptized into Christ upon profession of repentance and faith in his own appointed way. Nor can the error of any man's judgment, or an involuntary mistake in any instance, be admitted as a plea for wilful disobedience to the divine will, IN ANY THING. And here let me ask Dr. F. Whether he believes there are any Pseudo-baptists in England, who have made religion and the will of Christ their careful study, for I presume he would be ashamed to plead for the churches receiving any other to com-

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communion; I say, whether he thinks there are any such, who never heard that there are Christians, who dip only the adult believer, when they receive members into Christ's church; and who dissent from them, because they believe that their practice of Infant Sprinkling is not of God; and is so far from having foundation in the Gospel of Christ, that it is only a mere human tradition, the corrupt invention of men. And is not this of itself sufficient to put a person of integrity upon a fair and candid examination? And moreover, does he not know, that many, if not most of those, he is so fond of letting into the Church, and for whose sake he is endeavoring to ruin and destroy the barrier, which Christ himself established, as has already been shewn; I say, does he not know, that they are somewhat acquainted with the controversy between us; but instead of receiving the truth in the love of it, do they not make use of the most weak and trifling Objections and pretenses, to excuse themselves from obeying Christ in Baptism? So weak and trifling are the pleas made use of, that the Doctor himself accounts them *, no other than '*a heap of confusion and inconsistency; ... mere dismal sounds that have no energy in them, can never convince the truly considerate and divested of all prejudice, nor answer any valuable purpose.*' And besides all this, do they not own, that ours was the practice of Christ and his Apostles, and only pretend, upon such weak and trifling pleas, *that Infant sprinkling will do as well*; which is no less than saying, that the corrupt inventions of men and their own gross Superstition, as the Doctor calls it, will do as well, as the divine appointment and command of the Infinitely wise Jehovah? Upon the whole therefore, whatever the Doctor may think of them, under the many and frequent opportunities they have of conviction, by knowing our practice; or by what bias it is, that the prejudices of education prevail over them; whatever is the reason that they do not see their error, or however sincere they may be; yet the church must no more depart from the rules prescribed in the Gospel, for receiving members into her communion, than judge those, who do not comply with them. These things must be left to that day, when the secrets of all hearts shall be revealed, and all acts of religion in those, who profess to believe in Christ, shall be judged by his own words, John xii. 47. 48.

But has not the Doctor himself in the Sermon referred to, which was preached at Barbican before a multitude of hearers, among whom were several Pædo-baptist ministers,

* My Remarks, p. 91;

upon occasion of baptizing two persons, I say, has not the Doctor therein censured the error of Pædo-baptism, and every alteration in God's positive institutions, as severely as any man can do, and in terms as strong? And how then can he plead for the right of such persons to the privilege of the Christian communion without the greatest inconsistency? Or can he think such *gross superstitious* corrupters of God's institution communicating with his church, can be at all acceptable, or rather that it is not sinful in his sight, highly displeasing to him, hurtful to his people, and injurious to the cause and interest of truth, and to all religion, whilst they refuse to be baptized, as he has appointed? And for Dr. F. to plead otherwise is, I think, *entertaining very unworthy notions of the wisdom and goodness of the supreme governor of men, and undermining the foundation of all religious obedience*, which is an impartial, unrestrained and uniform obedience to every part of his revealed will. And as he here says, *There are but two positive institutions, both of which are intended and adapted to cherish good purposes, and promote a virtuous life*; then consequently he who refuses a personal obedience to Christ in the one, cannot be worthy of partaking with his church in the other. And if they are in other respects ever so worthy, they can have no right to the Lord's supper, whilst they remain unbaptized; nor has the church any right to admit them to the holy communion. She dares not go to Rome for authority, and she can have no authority to admit them from Dr. F's. new and groundless conceit; which instead of *strengthening right dispositions in the mind, and carrying habits of piety to a higher degree of perfection*, as he pretends, would most naturally tend to root out all regard for instituted worship and supernatural revelation, to the dishonour of God and Christ the great and most worthy authors of them. We ought therefore to keep *inviolable the foundation, on which christian societies are to be formed*, as Christ himself has laid it, for like the words of the Apocalypse, I apprehend it can neither be *enlarged nor restrained*, extended or retrenched by any persons without the greatest hazard. Rev. xxii. 18. 19. Gal. i. 6, 7, 8, 9.

VI. ' Again, who ever belongs to the body of Christ, has
 ' an interest in him as his Saviour; and therefore, however
 ' erroneous in other respects, may, as to his habitual frame
 ' and temper, be fit to commemorate his dying love, and
 ' the wonderful goodness of God the Father of all (the ori-
 ' ginal contriver and author of the redemption of mankind)
 E ' with

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‘ with joy and gratitude. Upon which account, it must be
 ‘ absolutely unreasonable, to hinder persons of this character
 ‘ from joyning in the solemnity, (which was instituted on
 ‘ purpose to perpetuate this thankful commemoration) with-
 ‘ out an express and particular injunction of the Christian
 ‘ Lawgiver.’

Whoever, as Dr. F. has before worded it, justly, truly and really belong to the body of Christ, have an interest in him as their Saviour, because they have, as he appointed, been baptized into him, and thereby put on Christ, and become members of his body ; so that it must be absolutely unreasonable to hinder persons of this character from joyning in the solemnity, which was instituted on purpose to perpetuate in the Church a thankful commemoration of Christ's dying love ; if the lives and conversations of such persons be as becomes the gospel of Christ, however erroneous, in other respects, they may happen to be. I say with him, it must be absolutely unreasonable to hinder them from commemorating the dying love of Christ, and the wonderful goodness of God the Father of all (the original contriver and author of the redemption of mankind) with joy and gratitude. But that any persons in the world are justly truly and really, that is to say, properly members of his body, who have never been baptized into him, as he has appointed his members to be, can never be proved. Instead of doing this, the Doctor only takes it for granted, that unbaptized persons, who are of an habitual good frame and temper, may be allowed to be members of Christ's body, because he would have us admit them to our communion ; which I presume is more than many Pædo-baptists desire, unless it be to justify their gross superstition in sprinkling Infants, and so excuse their refusing subjection to Christ in baptism. Tho' indeed the Doctor no where sufficiently and clearly explains himself, whom he means by those, who belong to the body of Christ. If he means such, as believe in Christ, but have never been baptized, nor had any thing administred to them instead of baptism, this is contrary both to scripture and antiquity ; for such have not put on Christ in any way, and therefore cannot belong to his body, as I have before proved, p. 17—20. And, If he means such, as have received what they call baptism, but is not truly so, their frame and character, be it ever so good, is no rule to the church ; for she in the admission of members must strictly keep, and inflexibly adhere to the word of God, which is her only acknowledged rule, and therefore she cannot give up Christ's own institution,
 from

from a charitable opinion towards them. Nor can it be lawful for the Church to receive any persons into her communion, who refuse obedience to Christ in Baptism, which is his own appointed way of entrance into his Church, unless *the christian Law-giver* had declared what qualifications should be sufficient without such obedience, and had given us *an express and particular injunction* to receive them into the communion and fellowship of his church: Which I presume would have been a repealing and annulling his commission to *Baptize all nations in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*, to all intents and purposes. And therefore tho' the Church is fully justified in refusing to admit, yet she must be absolutely inexcusable, if she comply with what he has nowhere commanded. For if the Scriptures are to the Church a perfect rule for faith, worship and practice, then whatsoever is not therein warranted by some command or example recorded, is thereby plainly and clearly enough forbidden to be done by her. So that what Dr. F. has here urged amounts to no more than a mere begging the question in dispute, and is what neither scripture nor reason will in any wise justify.

And as there is nothing in the Doctor's discourse, which tends to encourage Pædo-baptists or others to obey our Lord Jesus in that solemn institution of baptism, *which he, in the name of God, and as invested with his supreme authority, has enjoined upon* all who believe in him, and profess to be his disciples and followers; but a great deal which rather tends to hinder and prevent such obedience: And as there is nothing to induce any persons to leave the Pædo-baptist communion, to join in that of the Baptists, or true christian church, if we were willing to admit them, unless it be, as I before hinted, for us to justify their unscriptural practice in sprinkling infants, and to excuse their refusing subjection to Christ in baptism: So his sermon rather tends, and is better calculated, to seduce truly baptized christians to follow the ministry, and join the communion of those, who make void this commandment of God by the traditions of men. And thus by leaving their own proper assemblies, into which they were baptized, and forsaking their own christian communion, lead them into the heinous sin of apostasy, and at last put an entire end to the pure and uncorrupted churches of Christ; and cause the very name of them to cease, to the unspeakable grief of our pious Ministers and all others, who love the truth and institutions of Christ our only Lord and Master in sincerity. This is the natural tendency, and most likely in my

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opinion to be the effect and consequence of the Doctor's discourse on Catholic communion, if what he there argues to promote our receiving unbaptized persons to our communion be at all regarded, or admitted by us for truth. And what thanks or reward he can expect for it, or what comfort he can take in the reflection, I am not able to conceive.

VII. ' Finally, as all the real members, of the body of
' Christ, are entitled to the transcendent and glorious privi-
' leges of the kingdom of heaven hereafter; can it be ima-
' gined, that they are unfit to partake of lower and more
' imperfect privileges? Or can we be excused in denying
' them the proper means, to assist and compleat their prepa-
' ration for the heavenly felicity? Can we question their
' right to commemorate his amazing condescension, and pre-
' sent state of exaltation and glory, who dyed for their sins,
' in common with those of other sincere Christians; who
' rose again for their justification; and is gone to provide
' mansions for them in his Father's house? The contrary
' conduct, let us examine the matter in every light, will I
' am persuaded, be found to be much more becoming;
' viz. that by allowing them the privilege of christian com-
' munion, we treat them as brethren; not as strangers and
' foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and of the
' household of God.'

What I remarked of Dr. F. begging the question in my examination of the foregoing is also plainly the case of this paragraph, which finally concludes his first head. Here are many questions put, which are nothing to the purpose, till he proves, that the church has power to revoke, or at least to dispense with the commands of Christ, or till he can prove from scripture, that unbaptized persons, are *really, justly, and truly*, members of Christ's body, and may be lawfully received by the church to the privilege of christian communion. For though we allow, that many of the unbaptized may be partakers of *the transcendent and glorious privileges of the kingdom of heaven hereafter*, yet that is what the church has nothing to do with here: for the particular persons, who shall be so she is utterly unable to know, nor is it her province, for God only can discern the thoughts and intents of the heart, and he will treat every man accordingly. But it is the Church's duty to keep close to the rule, which Christ has left them; and those persons, who will not conform to that rule, must be left by the church *to the uncon-*
venanted

venanted mercies of God, language which many dissenting Pædo-baptists have been very fond of. And whilst the church does this, she only acts, as becomes her, to maintain this institution of the Gospel, and secure the salvation of her members, which to every one may be greatly endangered by sacrificing, betraying or giving up what they know to be Christ's ordinance, in complaisance to any persons, under the false notion of charity : which I am fully persuaded must necessarily center in an utter disregard to that institution of God, if not of christianity in general, should the church once allow unbaptized persons the privilege of christian communion with her, and in that way treat them as *fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of Faith*. The contrary conduct, therefore, let us examine the matter in every light, will, I am persuaded, be found to be much more becoming the true church to continue in, as it will best demonstrate that duty and faithfulness, which she owes to God, secure the truth, and maintain the honour of Christ and his Laws.

VIII. ' The second proposition naturally arising from the
' Text, which I (says the Doctor) proposed to explain and
' illustrate, is this—that nothing should be required in order
' to communion, but what is absolutely necessary to denote
' minate a man a Christian. For if all, who belong to the
' body of Christ, have a right to christian communion ; no-
' thing ought to be insisted on in order to communion, but
' what is an essential and indispensable part of true christia-
' nity. Was it indeed a communion of particular sects, (I
suppose the Doctor means of any particular sect, and not the
communion of all the particular sects of Christians together,
as his words here most plainly signify, tho' very inconsistently ;
for how then should each of their discriminating sentiments,
and customs, be the proper qualification for such communion,
which indeed is the very communion that he designed by this
Sermon to promote, and has recommended, for is there any
discriminating sentiments and customs in which all sects agree.)
' Was it indeed, says the Doctor, a
' communion of particular sects, their discriminating senti-
' ments, and customs, would be the proper qualification :
' But the thing, which St. Paul speaks of, is the communion
' of Christians ; and, therefore, whatever determines
' the christian character, must also determine the right to
' this communion,—And what is this ? Is it to espouse the
' principles of any society, or denomination, of Christians ?
' Is it to form a just idea of every part of the gospel-revelation ?

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'tion? Nothing of this kind can be maintained, without cutting off, the far greater part of the world, from all hope of salvation by Christ.'

How does the Doctor here prove this second proposition, *that nothing should be required in order to communion, but what is absolutely necessary to denominate a man a christian?* Why, by asserting the same thing again. That *nothing should be insisted on in order to communion but what is an essential and indispensable part of true christianity.* And then again, *Whatever determines the christian character must also determine the right to this communion.* This is surely a most extraordinary way of reasoning, and a very uncommon method of proving a proposition. But for a man of great learning and superior good sense thus to stoop to it, plainly discovers the weakness of the cause he has undertaken; that it is quite destitute, and stands in great need of better arguments to support it: These are so near a-kin to what is despised by every novice, namely a thing *is so, because it is so*; that we can scarce discern any difference in the features. And as we have too much of this sort of proof in this Sermon, so those who consider it, tho' they must admire the Doctor's attempt, can never be won by such kind of arguings to adopt his unauthorised scheme.

And here I would ask the Doctor, whether baptism is not necessary to denominate a man a christian, according to that other Sermon of his, which I have here made use of; for how can a man be a christian, before he has put on Christ? and also, whether baptism be not necessary to make a man a member of Christ's church, since there is no precept, nor any example to be found in the New Testament of unbaptized persons received to the communion, or being admitted members of the Christian Church? The historical parts shew the contrary, and all the Epistles were written to adult baptized believers only, and, as the Doctor says, *impossible by any force or stretch of invention to be adapted or extended to any others.*

For according to them, that, which is absolutely necessary to denominate a man a christian, a true disciple or follower of Christ, is a conformity to his will, and a ready obedience to all his commands, which must include his positive institutions; and whoever refuses this, cannot be *really, justly, and truly* intitled to that character; for the ordinance of baptism is one essential and indispensable part of christianity, without which, no man can enter into his church, if Christ himself is, to be believed, John iii. 3-5. And to this the church may

may stedily and inflexibly adhere, without cutting off, the far greater part of the world, from all hope of salvation by Christ.

But surely there is one thing, in which all christians do agree, namely, that he is their Lord, and that it is their duty to obey him as such. They may also know, that baptism is his appointment for all, who believe in him, as much as the communion is for all those, who are baptized into him. And as the Doctor thinks they may all agree to obey him in the one, why not in the other also, if they please? The first is as strictly enjoined, and equally as necessary for them all to agree in, as the latter: and the church may think it so without supposing in the least, that it is equally necessary for every man to form a just idea of every part of the gospel-revelation. Nothing of this kind can be, or ever was expected by her, and yet she may stedily and inflexibly adhere to the foundation principles of the doctrine of Christ in regard to communion, without the least thought of cutting off the far greater part of the world, from all hope of salvation by Christ: as the Doctor most weakly and absurdly expresses himself. But, by the way, if Dr. F. thinks a man cannot have the least hope of salvation without the privilege of Christian communion, he has much less charity than myself; and then this is the only reason that I can find throughout his whole discourse, why he is so zealous to promote the general Communion of all christians in one of Christ's positive institutions; whilst at the same time he seems entirely unconcerned, whether they pay any regard at all to the other. But let him seriously consider, whether those professors are not utterly unworthy, I do not say of salvation, but of the communion of the Church, who will not obey Christ in the institution of Baptism, in order to obtain it. But I should be glad to know, who the Doctor means, whether he has a particular view to the Baptists, where he says, *Was it indeed a communion of particular Sects, their discriminating sentiments and customs, would be the proper qualifications: but the thing, which St. Paul speaks of, is the communion of Christians.* Does he here fall in with the ludicrous sneers and idle jests, which have been made upon those churches, which require adult Baptism as a previous qualification for any Christians partaking with them at the Lord's table, by some in the Doctor's own way of thinking, who have in derision represented the communion of such churches not as the Lord's Supper, but as their own. Tho' I think he must know, as I have herein made it appear, that the conditions, which intitle to our communion are no other than what scripture and reason

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reason has made so; that we are as careful in every particular to follow exactly the directions, which the scriptures give for the celebration of that sacred ordinance, as we do in Baptism, without the least mixture from the customs or usages of human authority; and as such the Doctor, I believe, has very often with great satisfaction, and comfort, communicated in our congregations, and if ours was *the communion of Christians* then, it must still remain so, for we have made no change in our practice, since his deserting us, and therefore, cannot be justly stiled *only a communion of particular Sects*, and not *the communion of Christians*, as his words seem to suggest. So that all Dr. F—'s pleas here may justly be accounted trifling and impertinent, or in his own words * *'a heap of confusion and inconsistency* — mere dismal sounds, that have no energy in them, can never convince the truly considerate, and divested of all prejudice, nor answer any valuable purpose: but may perhaps deceive and mislead the weak and inconsiderate, under the specious pretences of charity and catholicism. His next paragraph runs thus:

IX. 'How then, shall we come to a right knowledge, of this general invariable ground of Christian communion? Why, by searching the scriptures: For however the sentiments of men, through weakness, prejudice, or interest, may be confused and divided, the rule of the gospel is express and certain, viz. that whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, and endeavours to understand the revelation which he brought from heaven, and to act agreeably to it, is a good christian, whatever his mistakes may be in matters of lesser moment; and, of consequence, the connection between these two having been sufficiently proved, is intitled to the charity and fellowship of christians. And it is necessary that this rule be strictly adhered to, for this reason likewise, because, without it there can be no possible centre of christian unity. *All parties, being possessed with an high opinion of their distinguishing principles*, will probably insist on one or more, of them as fundamental principles: and introduce endless schisms and disorders. If we are contented with the scripture rule, we may unite in affection and brotherly communion, though we cannot in opinion: but if we propose any terms, distinct from what the gospel has directly fixed, as essential to christianity, and allow the same liberty to others, which we claim for ourselves; in every such instance, fancy and partiality being

* My Remarks, p. 91,

‘our only guides, we must for ever despair of harmony and peace.’

If as Dr. F. here says, the only way to come at a right knowledge of this general invariable ground of Christian communion, is by searching the scriptures; and that the rule of the gospel is express and certain; and, it is necessary that this rule be strictly adhered to, because without it there can be no possible center of christian unity: then, by his own confession, the far greater part of the world, are, I do not say in his words, cut off from all hope of salvation by Christ, but from the privileges of christian communion; because the Scripture nowhere gives any instance of unbaptized persons being admitted to that privilege, nor any precept for the church ever to receive them: On the contrary, we have Christ's express authority for rejecting them John iii. 3. 5. And Dr. F. says it is necessary that this rule be strictly adhered to, . . . because without it there can be no possible center of Christian unity.

Moreover, unbaptized persons must of necessity be rejected by the Church, according to the description, which the Doctor here gives us of the only persons, who are entitled to the charity and fellowship of christians: for he says they are such, as believe that Jesus is the Christ, and endeavor to understand the revelation, which he brought from heaven, and to act agreeably to it. So that when a believer in Christ, upon due enquiry, is baptized into Christ, upon the profession of repentance, and faith, He acts agreeably to the revelation, which Christ brought from heaven, and is a good christian. And all those, who own they believe that Jesus is Lord and Christ, are by that acknowledgment obliged to obey every part of his Institution: but whoever refuses to act, as above, cannot be intitled to the fellowship of christians. For the scripture does not only require faith in Jesus Christ; but also that he who believeth in him be likewise baptized in his name, Mat. xxviii. 18, 19. Mark xvi. 16. Acts ii. 38. Ch. viii. 37. And accordingly Dr. F. himself, many years after he had taken upon him the ministry, renounced the errors he had been in, and became obedient to the ordinance of baptism, agreeable to the revelation, which Christ brought from heaven; that in conformity to the Scripture, he might be received to fellowship and communion with the true church of Christ, and ordained a pastor in it. And as he says it is necessary, that this rule be strictly adhered to; so I hope all the churches of baptized Christians, as they act agreeably to that revelation, which

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Christ brought from heaven, will also be contented with the Scripture rule : and whilst they are so contented, tho' mixed communion with unbaptized professors must not be admitted ; yet Christians rightly and truly baptized, may all unite in affection, and brotherly communion, though they cannot in opinion. But if we should once propose any terms, distinct from what the gospel has directly fixed, we shall then introduce endless disorders, or still greater evils ; as the natural result of what the Doctor recommends.

And if Dr. F. *build again the things he once destroyed, he makes himself a transgressor*, in the judgment of St Paul, Gal. ii. 18. Whether he has done so by this discourse, and by leaving the true church of Christ, to take upon himself the charge of those people, with whom he now holds communion, I will not take upon me to say. For by whatever means his Judgment is biased and misled, I am well satisfied he always acts with the sincerity and uprightness of one, who wants no information, that *when the secrets of all hearts shall be revealed*, we must account for our religious conduct by the words of Christ ; whether we have *built thereon precious stones, or stubble* ; and perhaps for the consequences also, which may too naturally result from thence, in respect to such, who thro' weakness betray, or from base principles forsake and renounce Christianity, by regarding the character of the man more than the merits of the cause he pleads for : a thing quite contrary, and therefore injurious, to the purity and truth of the Gospel, in regard to Church constitution and worship.

X. Besides (says the Doctor) “ to require any thing but a
“ profession of Christianity, demonstrated to be sincere by a
“ regular and virtuous life, in order to communion, is making the thing impracticable, which notwithstanding is in-
“ joined in the New Testament as an universal duty : ” “ for
“ an uniformity either of right, or wrong, sentiments, in all
“ points of belief and practice, can never be expected, whilst
“ men have such different capacities and advantages, such
“ different educations, passions and interests. It cannot be,
“ that they should all concur in the same explications of
“ scripture, or that this, which is a thing impossible, should
“ be inculcated, by the infinite wisdom of God, as a necessary preparation for the performance of an universal duty.”

Whose words the Doctor has here adopted, just to paraphrase over again, I know not ; tho' he seems to rely very much on the sentiment contained in them : and as he has made them his
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own, I reply accordingly. If by a *profession of Christianity* demonstrated to be sincere, by a regular and virtuous life, he means, as he ought to do, a regular profession of Christianity in conformity to the divine will, by our being baptized into Christ upon profession of repentance and faith, according to the order of the Gospel, and thereby taking upon us, as he himself words it *, 'The solemn profession and acknowledgment of his religion, of that most wise, and holy, and excellent scheme of religion, which *Christ* was commissioned by God to reveal and publish, and enabled to confirm and establish by many unquestionable, great, and beneficent miracles: just as the Jews being baptized into Moses, implied in it, in the sentiment of St Paul... their owning him as their leader, and his institution to be divine; and, according to the Doctor, the general sense of being baptized into Christ is most evidently this: 'I then entirely agree with him; because there is nothing impracticable in such a profession of Christianity. But if he means any thing short of this, then his reasoning is delusive, and this is a most fallacious argument, if it may properly be called an argument. It supposes what, I believe, was never thought of by any body of Christians whatever. For God, who knows the state of human nature, does not expect from us a sinless obedience, or perfect unerring worship; nor conceptions right and adequate in every thing above what our natures are suited unto, or the powers and faculties of our souls able to arrive at; or, as the Doctor words it, *an uniformity either of right or wrong sentiments in all points of belief and practice*; or, that we should all concur in the same explications of scripture. But most undoubtedly, *an uniformity in wrong sentiments, or a concurrence in wrong explications of scripture*, is what infinite wisdom could not possibly inculcate. So that the Doctor had much better have omitted to mention any thing so very wrong, as his new scheme of communion is, and have kept only to that which is right, and may be supported by the scriptures of truth, and by the reason of things; which would have redounded to his honour, and have given me no room for this examination.

But tho' it is a thing impossible that the infinite wisdom of God should require, that the members of his church, notwithstanding their different capacities and advantages, their different educations and passions, should all concur in the same explications of Scripture, and have a strict uniformity of Sentiments in all points of belief and practice; does it therefore follow, that the same divine infinite wisdom cannot, or has not

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* My Remarks, p. 87.

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required of all those, who believe in Christ, and own him for their Lord, *an uniformity of obedience* to one particular act, *as a necessary preparation* (the Doctor should have said qualification) *for the performance of* another particular act? For if God has made the communion of Christians at the Lord's table *an universal duty*, as Dr. F. here twice asserts, why may he not have made baptism by the command of Christ *an universal duty* also? I am sure the words of scripture are rather more strong and binding, for the universality of obedience to the institution of baptism, than for our communion together at the Lord's supper. Moreover, it is most indisputably plain, and certain, that God did the like under the Jewish dispensation, when he made the act of circumcision upon every male, a necessary qualification for eating the Lord's passover. And has not Christ as expressly declared by the authority of God, that *except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit he cannot see, or enter into his church*; without which it is impossible any should be entitled to the privileges of it, by partaking of the Holy communion? Hence it appears therefore, that the Doctor's arguing is false in fact, and a flat contradiction to himself, where he says, of the ordinance of 'Baptism, that it * is a duty entirely christian and a matter of mere instituted service, ordained indeed not wantonly, for the display of power, and the prerogatives of sovereign rule, but wisely calculated to subserve the great purposes of virtue, and the ultimate end of all true religion: *as it is intended and adapted to cherish good principles, and promote a virtuous life*. And as the obligation of it results wholly from the will of God, the supream Lawgiver, the original plan of institution ought, in every circumstance, to be strictly observed, and inflexibly adhered to. To annul, is to oppose and degrade the authority of God: to alter, is, so far as the alteration extends, the same as to annul. Circumstances may possibly happen here, as in the case of all other positive services, that will excuse, for a time at least, from the actual performance of this duty; but no situation, no plea of inconvenience, can justify our introducing and substituting a human ordinance in the place of a divine. But whenever such changes are attempted and complied with, the act immediately looses the nature of piety, and is converted into gross superstition. The piety is evacuated by departing from the command of God, which alone can constitute a religious obligation; and the superstition plainly appears, in that it is a service contrived

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* My Remarks p. 3. and paragraph 5.

‘and dictated by the blind conceit, folly, and arrogance of
 ‘man, which is the general essential nature, and the proper
 ‘character of all superstition. Let us now therefore proceed,
 ‘discarding and utterly renouncing all prejudices, whether of
 ‘education, custom, or interest; let us proceed calmly, and
 ‘with candour and simplicity of mind, consider the account,
 ‘which the New Testament gives of the ordinance of Bap-
 ‘tism, in which alone the primitive law, prescribing the
 ‘practice of it, is authoritatively recorded; and upon which
 ‘our judgment concerning it, if we are reasonable christians
 ‘or consistent protestants, must be absolutely and wholly
 ‘formed.’

Now as the Doctor here asserts that *our judgment concerning baptism, if we are reasonable christians, or consistent protestants, must be absolutely and wholly formed upon the New Testament, and that the original plan of institution ought, in every circumstance, to be strictly observed and inflexibly adhered to; so whilst the church does this, and acts like reasonable christians and consistent protestants, it is impossible she should receive into her communion those, whom he himself charges with the guilt of gross superstition contrived and dictated by the blind conceit, folly and arrogance of man, and who annul oppose and degrade the authority of God.* And I will farther add in his own words, that *no situation, no plea of inconvenience, can justify the churches introducing and substituting such persons members of her communion, any more than it will them, in changing God’s institution for their own gross superstition. But whenever any such thing is attempted, and complied with by the Church, the act immediately looses the nature of piety, and is converted into something worse than gross superstition.* For the church by that act does really *annul and degrade the authority of God* so effectually, that should it universally prevail, the credit and interest of christianity and all instituted religion founded on supernatural revelation, would be utterly ruined and destroyed, a sure foundation be thereby laid for rooting it out of the world, and upon the ruins thereof would infidelity and irreligion triumph.

Moreover, *Though ‘an uniformity either of right or
 ‘wrong sentiments, in all points of belief and practice, can
 ‘never be expected, whilst men have such different capacities
 ‘and advantages, such different educations, passions and in-
 ‘terests; tho’ it cannot be, that they should all concur in
 ‘the same explications of scripture, or that this, which is a
 ‘thing impossible, should be inculcated, by the infinite wis-
 ‘dom of God:’ yet it does not follow from thence, that the*
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infinite wisdom of God cannot give men rules for their conduct, which as religious communities of men they are indispensibly obliged to observe, and by no means allowed to dispense with; notwithstanding some persons cannot see their own obligation to observe them. Baptism is as plain a command, as any one precept in the gospel, and some men's not seeing their obligation to observe it, cannot surely be a justifiable reason for setting it aside; nor ought it to be looked upon, as a sufficient plea, for an admission to the Lord's Supper. If it should, by the same rule all the moral precepts of Christianity may be at once abolished and destroyed. For the Doctor, who knows the world so well, must be sensible, that there are men, who will controvert almost every point of morality, and through their *different capacities and advantages, their different educations, passions and interests*, judge differently of the whole moral law. And yet I suppose, the Doctor will not allow, that such men, not seeing their obligation to observe and practice any particular moral duty, are therefore set so entirely free from the obligation, as to be left perfectly at liberty to observe it, or not to pay the least regard to it, just as they please; though if the Doctor's reasoning be good in the former case, it must I apprehend be admitted also in this. If he should object, and say, by no means; for moral virtue is founded in the reason and nature of things; I answer, that obedience to the just commands of God the supreme law-giver is a moral virtue founded in the nature and reason of things. Besides which, the dispute, according to the Doctor's present reasoning, is not concerning the nature of the obligation, but concerning mens *different capacities and advantages*, for discerning the obligation. And if the want of discernment, whether arising from their *different educations, passions and interests*, be a sufficient plea for releasing them wholly from the obligation in any one case; it must by parity of reason be allowed the same in every case: consequently the nature and force of all laws divine and human would hereby be destroyed, and mankind be left perfectly free from every law, and at full liberty to follow their *different educations, passions and interests*: which, if pursued, must be of the most fatal consequence to the world, and to families, by putting the affairs of mankind in the utmost disorder and confusion. Nor can Dr. F. once object against this reasoning, because he fully confirms the same, where he says, † The positive duties of our holy religion are equally sacred, and demand from us, if we are from conviction

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† My Remarks, p. 1, 2.

‘ christians, and in decency of character, if we are only
 ‘ nominal, nay, if we are hypocritical, and merely mer-
 ‘ cenary christians, the same outward regard and strict
 ‘ observation, as those which are moral and unchangeable;
 ‘ —when therefore any of us, acknowledging the autho-
 ‘ rity of Christ, and the divinity and truth of his religion,
 ‘ live in the omission of any positive duty, which he in the
 ‘ name of God, and as invested with his supreme authority,
 ‘ has enjoined upon us; we act in such a manner, as is not
 ‘ only absolutely inconsistent with the character we assume,
 ‘ and should think it our honour to bear, of being his dis-
 ‘ ciples; but in a way that is a contradiction to itself, and
 ‘ to all the natural principles of reason. For there is
 ‘ no one clearer and more certain principle of everlasting
 ‘ and unalterable right, within the whole extent and scope of
 ‘ moral duty, than this; that the omnipotent creator and
 ‘ sovereign ruler, whose dominion is unlimited, and who is
 ‘ absolute in wisdom, and in all moral excellence, should
 ‘ be revered, honoured, and obeyed in all his laws, in all
 ‘ the discoveries and declarations of his will; whether by the
 ‘ voice of nature, or by extraordinary methods of revelation.
 ‘ And in no one point can there be the least just ground to
 ‘ object, without supposing that he is a capricious, arbitrary,
 ‘ tyrannical being, who is not in the abstract propriety and
 ‘ truth of things fit to be obeyed; nor, consequently, with-
 ‘ out entirely dissolving, together with every instituted rite,
 ‘ the religion of nature and reason itself.’

The Doctor still adds,

‘ XI. ‘ Or if we carry our thoughts further, and consider
 ‘ the ordinance of the Lord’s Supper under the notion of a
 ‘ privilege; what reason have we to believe, that Christ has
 ‘ ordered any of his faithful servants to be debarred from it,
 ‘ for a mere involuntary error in another point, which has
 ‘ no immediate connection with it, and does not interfere
 ‘ with the peculiar design and uses of it? If it had been our
 ‘ Saviour’s real intention, that other things should be regard-
 ‘ ed as terms of church-communion, besides what are neces-
 ‘ sary to constitute a true christian: without doubt, they
 ‘ would have been particularly specified, and declared in so
 ‘ strong and distinct a manner, like the terms of salvation, as
 ‘ not to leave room for wild and endless disputes. Had it
 ‘ been said, for example, that none but those, who submit to
 ‘ such a particular rite, or believe such doctrines, shall be
 ‘ admitted to communion in christian societies, the case must

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‘ have been beyond controversy : and, in my opinion, nothing less, than so express and formal a declaration, can determine either of the two to be necessary. As, therefore, there is an intire silence in this respect, as to all the peculiar sentiments and usages, by which christians are distinguished from each other ; this is a strong presumption, that the author of our religion did not design, that any of them should be insisted on. And the only sure way for us, in order to form a right judgment in particular cases, where the gospel has not explicitly determined, is to argue from the general nature of the holy communion, and the general scope and strain of christianity ; both which, as has been already shewn, direct us to receive true christians of all denominations : and finally, to argue on such principles, as are most honourable to our religion, and represent it in a worthy and amiable light ; as a religion that inspires peace, condescension, mutual forbearance, and a generous extensive charity.’

If the Doctor by *Christ's faithful servants* means such, who have respect unto all his commandments, and do whatsoever he has commanded them ; they cannot be supposed to be by his order debarred the privilege of the Lord's Supper for a mere involuntary error. But what does he mean by an *involuntary error* ? Can he think a believer's subjecting himself to the institution of baptism an *involuntary* obedience ? This he cannot do. And then is not a man's refusing that obedience to be looked upon as a voluntary act of disobedience. ‘ For as the Doctor says † ‘ 'tis most evident, that in both cases the event is not owing to a defect in the original rule, but to mens not attending to it, or substituting other false rules in the place of it :—for indolence, prejudice and vitious affections will pervert and darken the plainest rule.’ A man's refusing therefore such obedience to Christ, must be looked upon as his own voluntary act, arising from one or other of these causes ; especially, after the church has informed him of his duty in that particular ; for it can never be supposed, that the true church of Christ, should ever receive any to the high privileges they are under, without teaching them what Christ commanded to be observed, and done by all his disciples and followers ; with this encouraging promise, that *he would be always with them* in the performance thereof, *even to the end of the world*, Matt. xxviii. 18, 19. And if any are ignorant of this part of their duty, through their Minister's

† Preface of his Answer to Tindal.

nister's neglect, he must have but an imperfect account to give of his ministry; as having *shunned to declare unto them the whole council of God*, with which himself was acquainted.

Again, when the Doctor says, *a mere involuntary error in another point which has no immediate connection with it*; by point, in the singular number, I presume, he means baptism: and if he does; whether it has, or has not, an *immediate connection with the Lord's Supper*, it is equally required of all Christians. For by baptism, believers take upon them the profession of the christian name. But, there is really a manifest connexion between them, being both appointed to subserve the same wise and good ends. By Baptism, believers take upon them the profession of the name of Christ; and by the Lord's Supper, this profession is statedly renewed and manifested. They are both obligations to the Christian practice; and means of that holiness, which the Gospel requires. They are both designed, and are well adapted, to preserve the name and religion of our blessed Saviour in the world. Baptism therefore, is an ordinance, necessary to constitute a true christian; for can a man be a christian, before he has put on Christ, that is before he is baptized. Accordingly the apostle says, *Gal. iii. 27.* as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. And agreeable to the exposition, which the Doctor himself has given of this text, nothing done to any persons in the state of infancy, can intitle them to that character; for he says expressly, 'The phrase plainly denotes a voluntary act of their own, an act of piety in the subjects of baptism, and not a forced tie, not a mere external and mechanical operation; and consequently, infants are plainly declared, by this passage, to be incapable of baptism (if we proceed rightly, according to the christian rule,) because they are incapable of reason, and faith, and free determination. And this interpretation the same Apostle has confirmed beyond all contradiction in another place, where he opposes putting on the Lord Jesus Christ to making provision for the flesh, representing both as actions equally voluntary, and that relate to a moral character. As to put on the new man is explained by being renewed in the spirit of our mind; so to put on Christ is to take upon us the christian character, and to bind ourselves, in a solemn engagement, to imitate the temper and life of Christ; as all did, if we may give credit to St. Paul, who were baptized in the first age of christianity, but infants cannot possibly do; and therefore the baptizing such can be regarded in no other light than that

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that of an invasion, absolutely unknown in the apostolical times *

But moreover, the ordinance of Baptism has such an immediate and inseparable connection with the privileges of the christian Church, and with the peculiar design and uses of the Lord's Supper, that it manifestly appears to have been our Saviour's real intention, that it should be strictly regarded by all his followers, as indispensibly necessary to church-communion, and to constitute them true Christians; and therefore he has particularly specified and declared it in so strong and distinct a manner, like the terms of salvation, as not to leave room for wild and endless disputes; if men were but disposed to consider it, as all his true disciples will, and ought to do. For are the terms of salvation more distinctly declared, than the obligation that lies upon all, who believe in Christ, to be baptized; and that in order to their being made members of his church? Thus *Matt. xxviii. 19, 20. Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, &c. Mark xvi. 15, 16. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved*: on which see page 21, 27. *Acts ii. 38, 41, 42. Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about 3000 souls. And they continued stedfastly in the Apostle's doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. John iii. 3, 5. Verily verily I say unto you, except a man be born of water and of the spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God*, as his church is frequently stiled in scripture; which is no less than to affirm, that none but those, who submit to that particular rite, shall be admitted to communion in his church; and is, in my opinion so express and formal a declaration, as plainly puts the case beyond controversy. And nothing, but the Doctor's overweening fondness for this his groundless conceit, or partial desire, to vindicate, if possible, the error he is fallen into, could, I think, ever make him endeavour to confound a positive institution of God, with the peculiar sentiments and usages, by which Christians are now distinguished from each other; which is a most unfair, and most unjustifiable way of arguing; because, none of the different sects of Pædo-baptists, which he is so fond of incorporating into the church, had any manner of existence for many hundred years after the times of Christ and his Apostles; nay, not till within two or three centuries ago. This, therefore, is more than a strong presumption

* My Remarks, p. 88, 89.

sumption, that the author of our religion did not design, that those, who will not be obedient to him in baptism, should ever enter into his church, or be admitted to the privilege of the Lord's Supper in communion with her. So that, as the Doctor says, *the only sure way for us to form a right judgment in all cases, is to keep close, to what the gospel has particularly determined; and to look upon every particular case, which that has not explicitly determined, or is entirely silent about, as unlawful; because not commanded, and quite destitute of any example.* And in this view, we may also argue from the general nature of the holy communion; which is the standing memorial of Christ's undertaking, sufferings, and exaltation. For at the same time, whilst we revive in our minds a just sense of those high obligations that lie upon us; we renew and declare the solemn covenant we entered into by baptism, when we became members of Christ's mystical body, and acquired a right to all the privileges and benefits of his church; thereby solemnly giving up our names, dedicating ourselves, and covenanting with God to be his, and to obey his son in all things; *no longer to live unto ourselves, but unto him that died for us and rose again.* These are some of the high obligations, which as Christians we bring ourselves under in baptism; all which we renew, when we partake of the holy communion; which, being instituted in remembrance of Christ, was also designed to cultivate in us the graces and ornaments of the christian life, in peace, condescension, mutual forbearance, and a generous extensive charity, for all men, even our enemies; according to the general scope and strain of Christianity.

Baptism therefore is that, which qualifies a Christian for the orderly partaking of the Lord's Supper. And something like this we may justly infer from the Doctor's own words, who several times speaks of the Lord's Supper as a privilege; and here, in particular, considers it as such. Now a privilege necessarily supposes something, not common to all men; but to certain select persons, who had before come under the condition or conditions, which intitle to it. The privilege, liberty, or right to vote at an election, supposes the man to be a free burgess, or an inhabitant of such a city, town, or borough. The privilege, liberty or right of commonage the same. The privilege of eating the Supper of the Lord's Passover, among the Jews, that the men were circumcised. And, the privilege of christian communion in eating the Lord's Supper, that the person has been baptized. And I think, that something similar to these must be the case of every privilege. For when any thing is made common to all, it

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may be stiled a benefit ; but it then ceases to be a privilege peculiar to any.

*Finally, in vain do we pretend to argue on such principles, as are most honourable to our religion, and to the great author of it, and represent both in a worthy and amiable light, when we so far annul and degrade his authority, as to account or treat his first institution, as a trifling and unnecessary thing, which a man may do, or let alone; notwithstanding his command to obey it is universal. For, this is the greatest reproach and disgrace to him imaginable; because, if his express and positive commands are not binding upon, nor necessary to be observed, by the members of his church, or those who profess to believe in him, and are called after his name; then no part of christianity, as the institution of Christ, can be thought worthy of any man's regard. So that Dr. F——'s scheme of promiscuous mixt communion, is really sapping the very foundation, not only of christianity, but of all instituted religion and supernatural revelation whatever. - And all this the Doctor must of necessity acknowledge, because, he himself has carried the evil of Christians living in the omission of any positive duty, which Christ in the name of God, and as invested with his supreme authority, has enjoined upon us, which is expressly the case of Baptism, Matt. xxviii. 18, 19; he, I say, has carried the evil a great deal further, than I have yet done; when he says, ' And in no one point can there be the least just ground to object, without supposing, that he (God) is a capricious, arbitrary, tyrannical being, who is not in the abstract propriety and truth of things fit to be obeyed, nor, consequently, without intirely dissolving, together with every instituted tie, the religion of nature and reason itself *.'*

I now says the Doctor proceed to show,

XII. ' In the third place, that an universal brotherly communion of all good Christians, notwithstanding lesser differences, as it best answers the end of the institution of the Holy Supper, is also the most effectual way to advance the honour, and interest of true christianity. - And first, it is honourable to christianity, that it lays the chief stress on sincerity, more than on the justest speculations, and the greatest exactness in external and instituted duties; and inculcates that, as the only necessary recommendation to the esteem and friendship of our fellow-

‘ creatures, which intitles to the favour of God, and the rewards and blessings of eternity.—It is more honourable to christianity to suppose, that all those, who, in the temper and disposition of their minds, are qualified, to receive in a right manner, the privileges of the Gospel, should be allowed to partake of them; than to assert, that they are excluded, upon no foundation for it in the reason of the thing, but by a mere arbitrary appointment.—It is much more honourable to our holy religion, that there be a general easy rule, for the communion of all christians; than to explain it in such a manner, as leaves it on uncertain indeterminable principles, and, consequently, to humour and prejudice.’

As to this third head, Can Dr. F. think that obedience and non-obedience to the will of God in any of his commands are equally the same? Or that the latter is so trifling and insignificant a thing, as to be ranked with the lesser differences, which subsist between christians? Or that the church of Christ, can any way advance the honour and interest of true christianity, whilst she treats one of the two positive institutions of Christ, as unworthy of her strict regard, and to be by her dispensed with at pleasure, to all those who are unwilling to obey him in it? For this is what she does when she receives unbaptized persons into fellowship, or to the privileges of christian church membership and communion; and every baptized believer does the same, whenever he communicates with a congregation of unbaptized christians. This is in fact no less than putting a contempt upon the command of their Lord, to baptize all nations; a kind of renouncing their own baptism, and tacitly declaring, that it is unnecessary to church privileges; notwithstanding Christ has solemnly affirmed, that *except a man be born of water and of the spirit, he cannot see or enter into his church*. It is also encouraging other professors, to put the greater contempt upon it, and to continue in their non-obedience to it. Nay, we thereby, *so far as the act extends, annul one of God's most solemn commands, to the degrading his authority and honour*; and whatever does this, can never advance the honour and interest of true christianity.

As to the Doctor's plea of sincerity, he must know, that it is impossible for the church to judge of any man's, but by his ready obedience to the will of Christ, and a life correspondent to it. And *it is sufficiently honourable to christianity, that it recommends a life of purity and holiness in every*

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every thing, and prefers that far above faith and knowledge in speculation, tho' ever so just; and that it also directs the church to withdraw from every brother, that walks disorderly, and not after the commandment and doctrine of Christ.

And this clearly shews, what temper and disposition of mind is to be preferred before other things, without violating, annulling or degrading Christ's authority in any of his commands; which no sincere persons, who are in the temper and disposition of their minds qualified to receive in a right manner the privileges of the gospel, will ever refuse to obey; when the church has truly 'laid before them the necessary and unalterable condition of their receiving those privileges.' 'And to that of Baptism in particular the Doctor further says, 'as the obligation of it results wholly from the will of God 'the supreme lawgiver, so the original plan of institution 'ought, in every circumstance, to be strictly observed, and 'inflexibly adhered to:' and therefore, whilst the church does this, she can never receive into her communion, such as will not conform to that divine appointment. Nor can the churches keeping thus close to the scripture rule, that she may neither annul nor degrade the authority of God in any instance, by admitting those into her communion whom Christ has excluded from his church, be with the least truth or justice termed an excluding them upon no foundation for it in the reason of the thing, but by a mere arbitrary appointment. And herein it is much more honourable to our holy religion, that there is such a general easy rule for the communion of all christians, as does not leave it to humour and prejudice, nor rest it on uncertain indeterminable principles; as Dr. F's. scheme must necessarily do.

But what does the Doctor mean by a mere arbitrary appointments? If he accounts baptism such, is not the Lord's supper as much an arbitrary appointment? If he thinks it unworthy of God to appoint, that a believer in Christ should be baptized as one condition of his partaking of the holy communion, why does he say, that Baptism is 'intended 'and adapted to cherish good purposes and promote a virtuous 'life;' 'Wisely calculated by God the supreme lawgiver to 'subserve the great purposes of virtue and the ultimate end 'of all true religion?' For these are likewise the ends of the holy communion, and therefore it can be no more unworthy of God to appoint, that persons should be baptized in order to partake of the Lord's supper, than it is to appoint

point the Lord's supper itself. And if God is a Lawgiver, who acts *arbitrarily*, as the Doctor's words seem to imply; then surely he has as much right to make baptism one condition of a christians receiving the Lord's supper, as to appoint the Lord's supper to be communicated in by christians at all; and therefore it must be equally our duty, and it as much becomes us to obey him in baptism, as in the communion.

XIII. Again, *says the Doctor*, 'whatever naturally tends to promote concord, and unite christians of all denominations, must give a more worthy and advantageous idea of the gospel of Christ; than what has a direct tendency to create animosities, and divisions. Now the latter, I take to be the consequence, of narrowing our communion, beyond what a regard to sincerity, and common christianity, requires. It begets shyness, and alienation of affection; jealousy, and diffidence of each other. It begets passion, heightens prejudice, and maintains a spirit of opposition; as the result of which, christianity itself is exposed to contempt, and thereby weakened; and on this account likewise, that the professors of it, acting on such principles, instead of considering themselves as united by one common interest, and bearing one grand character, that ought to swallow up all lower distinctions, will be apt to pursue separate views, and support factions against each other: but, chiefly, as the general cause of religion and virtue is likely to suffer by this conduct, by having less esteem and regard paid to it, than to comparatively useless peculiarities; which, at best, are but appendages, fences, and helps to true religion.'

If Doctor F. in the first sentence of this paragraph has not some view to Baptism, as well as to other things; I think he can hardly be justified in not making it an exception; but leaving his readers to conclude, that the first solemn institution of our blessed Lord, has a *direct tendency to create animosities and divisions*. And if in that sentence he does include and intend baptism, as well as other things, it is certainly one of the most unworthy reproaches cast upon the blessed Jesus, and his most excellent religion, which can well be conceived; and is what every unbeliever will rejoice to meet with from him; because, they perhaps may think it a full and clear justification of every thing they have said, or can say against Christianity: namely, that the solemn institution, which

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which Christ was sent from heaven to establish, as the entrance into his church, or the kingdom of God, as that is styled, *has a direct tendency to create animosities and divisions*. But what if such things, as he has multiplied into twelve or fourteen degrees, have sometimes arisen among christians, as I allow there have; they could never be owing to the nature and *direct tendency* of the duty required; but must arise from the perverseness of temper, pride of heart, or some other bad principle or prejudice, by which men are too often governed. Thus, the glad tidings of peace and salvation by the gospel of Christ; which at his birth was most justly proclaimed, *Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good will to men*; was notwithstanding, the innocent occasion of discord in the world, and of setting families at variance; Matt. x. 35. 36. *A man against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law, against her mother in law, and a man's foes they of his own household*. Thus, it became the occasion of unnatural perfidiousness, cruelty and bloodshed; not through its own tendency, but through the evil disposition of them, who did not believe. And though all this should happen to be the case with respect to Baptism, it does not follow, that it ought to be given up or dispensed with by the church to any persons whatever; any more than that the whole christian institution should be abandoned and rejected, because of the opposition it has met with from wicked men and infidels. Nor can the church give up or dispense with this institution of the gospel to any man, whilst her members retain the least regard to *sincerity and common christianity*; for, if they have plainly read, and do sincerely believe, that Christ ordained Baptism as the initiating ordinance for constituting believers members of his church, they must give up that sincerity of belief, before they can admit the unbaptized to the privileges of Christian communion: as to the sincerity of those, who refuse obedience to Christ's commands, they are not the proper judges, but may say, as St. James does, *show me thy faith, without thy works* (if you can, or that is impossible) *and I will shew thee my faith by my works* or obedience, which is the best, if not the only evidence of it. Jam. i. 22—25. Ch. ii. 14, 17, 18—26.

For the church therefore *strictly to observe, and inflexibly to adhere* to this constitution of their Lord's, is so far from *narrowing our communion beyond what a regard to sincerity and common christianity requires*, that it is her indispensable duty so to do, that she may preserve the one in her members and
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secure the other from falling a sacrifice to infidelity, and being wholly extirpated. And if this should be attended with *shyness, alienation of affection; jealousy and diffidence* in others, arising from *passion, prejudice, or a spirit of opposition* in the pursuit of *separate views*, and for the support of *factions* against the true church; the evil and just reproach will be theirs, who look with *shyness and alienation of affection* on such, as dare not sacrifice an ordinance of Christ in compliance with their *prejudices, their separate views and factions*: and such spirits must undoubtedly be acknowledged to be every way unworthy of so great a sacrifice. And if true *religion and virtue* should in any thing happen to *suffer* by their ill behaviour and *conduct*; yet the honour of our great legislator, and the cause of christianity in general, would neither be so much weakened thereby, nor exposed to such contempt, as both must inevitably receive, by giving up this grand *appendage, fence, and help to true religion*.

And here by the way, let me ask Dr. F, if Baptism be an *appendage to true religion*, where shall we find *true religion* without it; because then, where that rite is wanting, something must be wanting to *true religion*. If it be a *fence to true religion*, then the church ought carefully to preserve and keep it, as an useful and necessary duty; and it must be very dangerous for her to dispense with her members obedience to it, for fear of degenerating not only to superstition, but to irreligion and infidelity also. If it be an *help to true religion*, then all sincere pious christians ought earnestly to desire coming under it, for the benefits, which they have reason to expect from it; the pardon and forgiveness of all past sins, and the assistance of the Holy Ghost being plainly promised to those, who sincerely obey it. *The obligation to it, not only, as the Doctor says, results wholly from the will of God; but is also intended and adapted to cherish good purposes and promote a virtuous life; wisely calculated by God the Supreme Lawgiver, to subserve the great purposes of virtue and the ultimate end of all true religion; and therefore must certainly be placed at the utmost distance from an useless peculiarity.* And can Dr. F. really believe all this? Can he also believe that baptism is an *appendage, fence and help to true religion*; and yet think it a trifling thing, of no consequence to the privilege of Christian communion?

XIV. And, finally, says the Doctor, I cannot but be of opinion, that an universal friendly communion, of all sincere

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2 Remarks p. 3. Paragraph 51

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‘ cere christians will, more effectually propagate the know-
 ‘ ledge of christian principles, than the contrary contracted
 ‘ scheme. Accidents indeed, may happen, which may seem
 ‘ to make against this; but they are to be allowed no weight,
 ‘ against the natural tendency of things. Whatever there is
 ‘ of this kind, may be owing to indolence, and the want
 ‘ of due care and application, to rectify the sentiments of those
 ‘ who are erroneous. And it will be sufficient to my present
 ‘ purpose, if it be allowed, that we have much better oppor-
 ‘ tunities, if we improve our advantages aright, of convinc-
 ‘ ing those, who are in the same communion with us, and
 ‘ consequently, with whom we have an immediate concern;
 ‘ than others, that we have but very few and slight occasions
 ‘ to converse with—Besides, that a condescending charitable
 ‘ behaviour will conciliate their affection, and induce them
 ‘ to consider, what we have to offer, with calmness and im-
 ‘ partiality; whereas if we keep them at a distance, and treat
 ‘ them as persons unqualified for christian communion, they
 ‘ will think themselves injured, and contract a prejudice
 ‘ against us; and, perhaps, receive all our arguments with in-
 ‘ difference, if not with contempt.’

Dr. F's final and last plea for promiscuous mixed commu-
 nion may, perhaps, be allowed of weight in speculation; which
 requires scarce any thing, but an assent of the mind to points
 of doctrine supposed abstruse, and which open themselves to
 the understanding of man by slow insensible degrees: but
 experience, I believe, proves the contrary with respect to
 the affair of baptism: and of necessity must do so, if the
 church herself should furnish persons, with the most powerful
 of all arguments against their obedience, by her own unjusti-
 fiable complaisance, in admitting them to the privilege of
 christian communion without it. For it requires no length
 of time to convince any man of a right temper and dispo-
 sition, that he ought to obey every one of Christ's commands,
 whom he owns for his Lord; and that baptism is one of his
 commands, to which some special promises are made over, to the
 sincerely obedient. Hence therefore, a man will be more
 likely to submit to Baptism, if he really desires or values
 christian privileges, when the church assures him, that, in
 faithfulness to Christ, whose laws are binding upon them,
 they dare not receive any man into their communion,
 untill he first becomes obedient to that institution, which
 Christ himself submitted to, when, with the high approbation
 of heaven, he said; *thus it becometh us to fulfill all righte-*
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ousness; and after that ordained it for every person, who enters into his church: I say, a man is more likely to receive baptism, when these things are laid before him, than can possibly be expected from him, if the church violates her trust, and dispenses with the institution of her Lord, by admitting him to membership and communion without baptism. For as baptism is an ordinance so much despised amongst men, as to be almost *every where spoken against*, he will, if admitted, most naturally argue after this manner, *viz*; tho' many of the members of our church have thought fit to be baptized, yet it is plain, that none of them think baptism of such consequence to others, either with respect to salvation, or church privileges, but that they can, and do receive me without it. And as they have received me to the latter, and allow that I have a title or ground to hope for the former; so I can get nothing by subjecting myself to baptism, even in *their* account, who have submitted to it; and therefore I need not concern myself at all about it.

And here let me ask Dr. F, whether in about six years time, since he deserted the baptist church, where he was ordained to the Pastoral office, and afterwards, for reasons best known to himself, took upon him the charge of an unbaptized congregation; he has ever had the good success by his own *condescending and charitable behaviour*, as he calls it, to *conciliate their affections, and induce them to consider with calmness and impartiality what can be offered* in behalf of baptism, as the institution and command of Christ. Has he prevailed with one person of note, or with any one, who was a member and in communion at Pinner's Hall, before his going over to them, to put on Christ by baptism, as his word requires? And if he has not, it cannot possibly be supposed, that it should be owing to any want of the *best* and fittest opportunities of *conversing* with them, accompanied with the high and uncommon advantage of being an admired minister. Nor ought we to suppose, that his ill success herein is *owing to indolence, or the want of due care and application* in him, to *rectify the sentiments of those, who are in the same communion with him*; and, consequently, with whom, as their Minister, he has a more immediate concern, than with others, and not *very few and slight occasions to converse with* — This would be an high reproach, and every way unworthy the character of a good christian, a friend and lover of truth. And therefore we must suppose, that his want of success, and having no influence upon them, in so many years, with respect to this duty; is entirely owing to such kind of reasoning, upon his joyning communion with them, as I have

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a'ready mentioned. And indeed, according to the natural tendency of things, this must be the necessary consequence of such kind of conduct in any baptized believer. And if so, then Dr. F——'s fondness for this his singular opinion, and strong desire to support, if possible, his unjustifiable conduct in holding communion with such persons, as he knows, and believes are unbaptized, has so blinded his understanding and judgment, as to prevent his discerning what upon the least reflection is most apparent; *namely*, that he has herein argued against experience and plain conviction.

But some persons will carry their reasoning about mixed communion, if ever Dr. F——'s scheme should universally prevail, much farther; and would very justly argue upon it, that no community of christians, who believe baptism the initiating ordinance, instituted by Christ for the entrance, or orderly reception of members into his church, can ever admit unbaptized persons to partake with them of the peculiar privileges of the christian church, unless they believe, that they have power to dispense with his commands. And if such power is any where given to the church, it must be found in the New Testament, her only acknowledged rule and guide in religion. But no such power is any where therein given to men; and therefore, if baptism may be dispensed with by the church for one person, without authority from Christ, it may also be dispensed with for every person, who is unwilling to submit to it. And if the church can dispense with one of Christ's institutions, she may also dispense with the other; which is indeed not so strictly enjoined, upon the members of Christ's mystical body. And if neither of the positive institutions of the son of God, are binding upon such as own him for their Lord; then none of the doctrines and precepts of our holy religion, considered as the doctrines and precepts of Christ Jesus, can be at all binding upon any man. And hence it would necessarily follow from Dr. F——'s scheme, which is not in the least countenanced by the New Testament, nor by the practice of christians for 1700 years; I say, it would follow from his scheme, that all instituted religion, and supernatural revelation, whence that is derived, is of no benefit to any man, of no force or authority at all, and is only a yoke and imposition put upon the weak and credulous. For I may defy him to shew, that any one part of christianity, as the religion of Christ Jesus, can be at all binding upon us, whilst some other parts of it, depending upon the same authority, are not so. For he that commanded his disciples *to have respect unto all his commandments, and to do what-*

whatsoever he commanded; he that commanded them to eat bread and drink wine in remembrance of him; commanded them also to be baptized in his name: and as St. James very justly reasons, chap. ii. ver. 10, 11. *Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For he that said, do not commit adultery; said also, do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law. So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty.*

XV. ' If, says the Doctor, it be objected to what has been said, that, by allowing a promiscuous communion of all sincere christians, of different denominations, the true primitive christian principles, and practice, may, in the end, be lost in some important points—I, answer, that if this proves any thing, it lays a sure foundation for all manner of imposition. For the primitive christian principles, and christian practice, are just of that importance to particular persons, and societies, as they apprehend them to be. If, therefore, the society, to which I belong, have a right to make their principles, from the opinion, which they have of their importance, stated terms of christian communion, so have another, if they judge theirs to be of equal moment, though their principles are directly opposite; so has every society, be the doctrines it espouses true or false, honourable to christianity, or subversive of its interests—And can any thing like order upon the whole, any real support of religion, result from hence? Not nothing but inconsistent terms of communion; nothing but breaches of peace; nothing but injury and oppression; the greatest part of which will fall on tender and scrupulous consciences, on men of the most steady and inflexible virtue.

Dr. F. I suppose, from a consciousness, that all he has before said in this discourse, is not sufficient to clear the subject, nor to satisfy the truly considerate, has given us this objection, which he foresaw might naturally arise from his new scheme of communion; and which, I think, must necessarily be carried a great deal farther; even in the end, to the extirpation of the whole christian religion, as I have already shewn. And though he is very far from answering his own objection, or from denying the sad consequences of what he recommends, as his own objection states it; he has instead thereof started an inference or two, which are neither just in themselves, nor any way arise from the argument contained in

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in the objection. For, if the ordinance of baptism, as the institution of Christ, which he himself, in the most solemn manner, and in the strongest terms, has fixed, as the entrance into his church, and nothing else (besides a good life and conversation, which the scriptures further enjoin on christians) is made the *term* and basis of *christian communion* (as that ought to be, if Christ himself as a legislator is to be regarded;) it will be so far from *laying a sure foundation for all manner of imposition*, as the Doctor pretends, that on the contrary it will be the most effectual security against all and every kind of *imposition*. It will entirely prevent any man, or any body of men, from imposing upon christians who are members of the true church, or upon any of their descendants, *an human ordinance instead of a divine*. It will prevent them from *annulling, or degrading the authority of God*, and imposing upon the church their own *gross superstition*, for the appointment of heaven. For neither Dr. F. nor any other man of sense, can ever pretend, that the true church, keeping close to this law of Christ, even his own express law, can ever give any other church a just pretence to impose their own fancies, as the *terms of christian communion*; let them think them of what *importance* they please.

Christ's authority, as our only legislator, is, and must always be, acknowledged by the true church; and none therein must dare to dispense with his institution, without a plain, *express, and formal declaration*, or licence from him so to do, any more than others may dare to usurp his place and authority, by substituting their own fancies and contrivances, either in faith or practice, as the terms and basis of christian communion, without a special commission from him. And therefore Dr. F.—'s pretence, that the churches taking this due care to secure *the true primitive christian principles and christian practice*, from being lost in some important points, *lays a sure foundation for all manner of imposition*, is most unjust, as being without the least foundation for it in the nature of the thing itself; but the quite contrary, is, I think, most evidently apparent.

And now if we consider the second inference, it will appear to have no better foundation than the other. His words are, *If, therefore, the society to which I belong, have a right to make their principles, from the opinion which they have of their importance, stated terms of christian communion, so have another, if they judge theirs to be of equal moment, though their principles are directly opposite; so has every society, be the doc-*

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trines it espouses true or false, honourable to christianity, or subversive of its interests. To this I answer. The true churches care to maintain this barrier, which Christ himself has fixed, as the initiating ordinance into his church, does not arise so much from her opinion of its importance, as from Christ's own opinion of it, and that great importance, which he declared it to be of, when he so solemnly established it for that end. And I am fully assured, that, tho' no society of christians in the world, have the least right to make their own principles, the stated terms and basis of communion; yet when Christ has so solemnly asserted, with a verily, verily, *except a man be born of water and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom or church of God**; they cannot have the least power to admit the best man in the world to their communion without it, so long as that is allowed to be a church privilege; as Dr. F. acknowledges, and has argued from it accordingly. Nor could any thing like order upon the whole, any real support of religion, ever result from admitting him. No: nothing but inconsistency, nothing but breaches of peace, nothing but injury to the glorious sacred cause of Christ, can ever result from thence; which must bring with it oppression, and incurable grief of mind, such as the Psalmist's was. cxix. 136. And this must necessarily and chiefly fall on tender and scrupulous consciences, on men of the most steady and inflexible virtue, of firm faith, and such sincere unfeigned love to Christ and all his laws, as every christian ought to have perpetually glowing in his breast, and openly to manifest, by his strict attachment and ready unrestrained obedience.

However, *If the true primitive christian principles, and christian practice, are just of that importance to particular persons, and societies, as they apprehend them to be; then surely, upon this principle, the Doctor cannot blame the baptists for opposing mixt communion.* For if they apprehend, that baptism is absolutely necessary to christian church-membership, and communion, because Christ has most solemnly affirmed, *verily verily, except a man be born of water and of the spirit, he cannot enter into (his church) the kingdom of God*; it must then be of so much importance to them, that they dare not dispence with it on any consideration whatever. Nor can the Doctor blame them in the least, because he says**, 'all the uses of it (baptism) that are specified in scripture, and the several expressions, by which the true nature of it is there represented, appear to me to be equally

* On which see my Remarks p. 100 ** My Remarks p. 94.

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‘applicable to every age of the church, and to all the believers of christianity—that the ordinance of baptism is of authority and force in all ages, and with respect to all christians, *and that God is honoured by their readily submitting to this law, which he hath prescribed.*’ So that the Doctor’s receiving unbaptized persons to his communion, and pleading for it, as he does in the sermon under consideration, is most absurd, and the greatest inconsistency he could possibly have fallen into.

Moreover, if it be true, as Dr. F. here asserts, *that the true primitive christian principles, and christian practice, are just of that importance to particular persons as they apprehend them to be;* how then shall infidels in the great day of account be judged by the gospel of Christ, under which they have lived, and against which they have contended? But if they may then be condemned, for excluding from their minds the glorious light of it, for rejecting the gracious offers of salvation, and eternal happiness, which are therein promised to all those, who sincerely receive and obey its precepts, and for despising the punishments therein threatened to unbelievers; they will then find, to their unspeakable misery and confusion, *that the true primitive christian principles and christian practice was, and would have been, of much greater importance to themselves, than they apprehended them to be.* And if this will be the unhappy miserable state of all such, who reject the whole christian institution, as the scripture assures us it will, Rom. ii. 16. 2 Thes. i. 6—10. Mark xvi. 16. John xii. 47. 48; can those christians be wholly excusable and blameless before God, who only despise and reject some parts of it, by thinking those parts of no importance to them? For have christians any just ground from Scripture, to believe or hope, that a regard for, and obedience to, some parts of the christian institution, will justify them, and atone for their despising or rejecting other parts of it?

But if *the true primitive christian principles, and christian practice, are really of no more importance to infidels and christians, than they, who despise and reject the whole, or but some part thereof, apprehend them to be;* and if no account shall ever be given, or punishment inflicted for such their rejection of the gospel of Christ; must it not of consequence also follow, that if christians are ever so zealous for the truths of the gospel, and careful to practice all the precepts of it, from an apprehension *that the true primitive christian principles, and christian practice, are of the utmost importance to their own particular persons and to all men;* yet in the last day

day it will be all delusion, and they will then receive no reward, nor meet with the least comfort, benefit, or happiness of any kind, for all their sincere piety, faithfulness in the service of Christ, or their sufferings for it. Then miserable, *most miserable* has been the state of all the martyrs and confessors for the christian cause, and those, who *are fallen asleep in Christ, are perished.* 1 Cor. xv. 13—19, 31, 30, 32. For then, their cruel and merciless persecutors, only discharging what they apprehended to be an important duty, will be equally as happy, as themselves; because *the true primitive christian principles and christian practice are just of that importance to particular persons, and societies as they apprehend them to be:* that is, *the importance of them extends no farther than the present life to the one, any more than to the other.* Upon the whole therefore

Thus it most clearly appears, that this sermon in every paragraph, and almost every sentiment contained in it, does, in its just consequences betray the truths and institutions, of the Gospel, does naturally tend to advance and establish infidelity upon the ruin of the christian cause. But I am persuaded, these most fatal evils are the farthest from the Doctor's sincere and most upright intentions, of any thing we can possibly conceive; his views and designs, I make no doubt, being the direct contrary: and therefore his falling into this most egregious mistake, must only be ascribed to his usual complaisance, his tender condescension, and natural desire to please and oblige all men. So that I have no occasion to shew, by any arguments, the certainty of future rewards and punishments, according to the doctrine of the New Testament. For I am well assured, the Doctor stedfastly believes them, and abhors from his very soul all such consequences, which so naturally result, and must necessarily arise from what he has advanced; whereby so great encouragement is given to infidelity, and so much injury done, or likely to ensue from thence to the christian cause. For if the Doctor himself is at all to be regarded, then all those who bear the christian name and character, are under indispensable obligations, not only to conform, and become obedient unto; but also to esteem and look upon the positive institutions of God, equally sacred and inviolable with those, which are moral and unchangeable. For these are his own words*.

* The positive duties of our holy religion are equally sacred, and demand from us, if we are from conviction christians,

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* My Remarks p. 1, 2.

and in decency of character, if we are only nominal, nay, if we are hypocritical, and merely mercenary christians, the same outward regard and strict observation, as those which are moral and unchangeable. Tho' they are not of the same importance and intrinsic dignity, they are, and must be equally inviolable, because there is but one enacting authority with respect to both the laws of nature and revelation: and tho' the former may be received, as fit rules of conduct, they can never be obeyed as laws of government, but upon the very same foundation and ground of authority. For nature cannot be superior to God, because it is the constitution and creature of God; it can therefore have no pretence to controul his will supernaturally revealed: for in both cases the wisdom is the same, and the right of governing the same. A christian therefore, to whom alone I am now addressing my discourse, must yield exact obedience to the positive institutions of the christian doctrine on the self-same principle, on which he thinks it is his duty to conform from motives of religion, or acknowledgment and suitable veneration of the supreme deity, to the eternal and universal rules of virtue and morality.

When therefore any of us acknowledging the authority of Christ, and the divinity and truth of his religion, live in the omission of any positive duty, which he in the name of God, and as invested with his supreme authority, has enjoined upon us, we act in such a manner, as is not only absolutely inconsistent with the character we assume, and should think it our honour to bear, of being his disciples, but in a way that is a contradiction to itself, and to all the natural principles of reason. For there is no one clearer and more certain principle of everlasting and unalterable right, within the whole extent and scope of moral duty than this, that the omnipotent creator and sovereign ruler, whose dominion is unlimited, and who is absolute in wisdom, and in all moral excellence, should be revered, honoured, and obeyed in all his laws, in all the discoveries and declarations of his will, whether by the voice of nature, or by extraordinary methods of revelation. And in no one point can there be the least just ground to object, without supposing that he is a capricious, arbitrary, tyrannical being, who is not in the abstract propriety and truth of things fit to be obeyed, nor consequently, without entirely dissolving, together with every instituted tie, the religion of nature and reason itself.

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Those truths are expressed in such strong and glaring terms, that every common reader may discern the just sense, and make the proper remarks; and therefore I proceed to the next paragraph, after the Doctor's single objection, as follows.

XVI. 'The pernicious consequences, of narrowing the foundations of christian communion, never appeared in so strong and glaring a light, as in the church of Rome, which, assuming to itself the name of the catholic church, and treating all of a different persuasion as hereticks and reprobates, has maintained, for several ages, a faction against common christianity, and the natural rights of mankind; and supported it by such detestable methods of tyranny and persecution, as are an infinite scandal to religion, and a reproach even to human nature. I might instance in the barbarities, executed on our poor brethren abroad, in several parts of Europe; and, particularly in that refinement, and horrid monster, of cruelty, the court of inquisition. But we need not seek for foreign instances, since the history of our own nation will furnish undeniable proofs, that this anti-christian church, for promoting it's interests, and the extirpation of heresy, has not scrupled to consecrate treason and murder, and commit such vile enormities, as we may defy atheism itself to exceed: and which, if they were really dictated by the christian spirit, would render our now excellent religion a wicked destructive scheme, and justly expose it to the scorn and indignation of mankind. The representing these things in their natural colours, without artificial and studied aggravations, must be sufficient to raise a strong detestation of the contracted and slavish principles, from whence they proceed, where there are any seeds of ingenuity, any remains of tenderness and compassion.'

This paragraph is very artfully introduced by the Doctor; not to inform the judgment, to clear the truth, and evidence his new scheme to the understanding, so much as to raise and influence the passions, and thereby leave some yielding impressions upon the minds of his readers, in favour of what he is so fond of promoting; without the least authority from the word of God, or the universal practice of the christian church for seventeen hundred years. Nor is the conclusion he draws from it at all just. For, though the most corrupt apostate church of Rome, by forsaking the rules and doctrines of the Gospel, and instead of confining the terms of church mem-

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bership and communion to the just and most reasonable barrier, which Christ himself established, has violated all the bounds and principles of moderation and humanity, to enforce and compel an implicit assent, and abject submission to her own absurd doctrines, and corrupt inventions, with which she has *made all nations drunk*; yet does it at all follow from thence, that no church ought to pay regard and keep close to the commands and institutions of Christ; that christian communion and fellowship should be left without any order or limits; or that Christ's Holy Supper should be made common to all, and his church or vineyard laid waste for such to enter, as Christ himself has expressly and solemnly excluded? John iii.

3. 5. Can Dr. F. possibly think, that the *horrid cruelties* which the church of Rome, and her accursed *inquisition* have perpetrated, are the natural effects of keeping close to Christ's command in excluding unbaptized persons from church privileges? Or can he call a *strict observation and inflexible adhering to the original plan of institution, a narrowing the foundations of christian communion, or contracted slavish principles, not dictated by the christian spirit, but to be strongly detested, where there are any seeds of ingenuity, any remains of tenderness and compassion*? If so, how could he assert of the ordinance of Baptism, that it is 'wisely calculated to subserve the great purposes of virtue, and the ultimate end of all true religion, that the obligation of it results wholly from the will of God the supreme lawgiver, and that the original plan of institution ought in every circumstance, to be strictly observed, and inflexibly adhered to . . . that no situation, no plea of inconvenience, can justify our introducing and substituting a human ordinance instead of a divine.—That it is an appendage fence and help to true religion,—intended and adapted to cherish good purposes and promote a virtuous life *?' The inconsistency and great contrariety of these things, with what he here pleads for, is too apparent, and must to the truly considerate take off all regard to what he has in this sermon advanced, so very contrary to himself, to the whole scope of the New Testament, to the end and design of the great author of christianity, and to the reason and nature of things.

XVII. 'But, says the Doctor, I choose rather, at present, to draw a veil over such scenes of horror, and turn your minds to more pleasing reflections, to sentiments of joy and gratitude; gratitude to the sovereign disposer of all things, for having delivered us from the fear of our enemies, disap-
pointed

' pointed their repeated attempts, to bring us again under an
 ' insupportable yoke of bondage, to banish true christianity,
 ' and impose their own religion upon us,—A religion, the
 ' fundamental principle of which is ignorance, and implicit
 ' faith; a religion, which is a contradiction to reason, its
 ' doctrines incredible, and its worship the very dregs of Pa-
 ' gan superstition and enthusiasm; a religion, which, by its
 ' compensations for moral guilt, by its ridiculous and slight
 ' penances, soothes and encourages the licentious passions of
 ' human nature; a religion, intirely calculated for the ad-
 ' vancement of priestly power and grandeur; a religion
 ' founded in fraud and imposition, and propagated by vio-
 ' lence and blood.'

We have indeed the highest reason, and are by gratitude
 obliged, to bless and praise God, who has most mercifully de-
 livered us from the incredible ignorance, superstition, and ty-
 ranny of the apostate church of Rome, and has hitherto *dis-*
appointed her repeated attempts to bring us again under her in-
supportable yoke of bondage; but let us all carefully guard a-
 gainst the contrary extreme; let us not grow indifferent to;
 nor sacrifice any, part of real christianity in complaisance
 to others, either by giving up, or dispensing with the insti-
 tution of baptism, in condescension to their prejudices against
 the truth: for such a compliance must most naturally tend,
 not only to banish true christianity from among us, but in the
 end to extinguish all regard to the christian name. For bap-
 tism, as Dr. F. asserts, *is a duty entirely christian*, &c. And,
 if the authority of Christ is not to be regarded and main-
 tained in that particular, why should it be so in any other,
 depending on the same authority? Infidelity therefore must
 necessarily rise, prevail, and be established, as our regard for
 his authority declines, and manifests itself by our giving up,
 or dispensing with his institutions. This indifference to
 Christ's institutions, and the boundless superstition which Po-
 pery has introduced, are such extremes of error, as very natural-
 ly bring to my mind what the Doctor says in his introduction,
 Vol. I. p. 12. ' But mankind, confused in thought and blinded
 ' by their passions, are too apt to overlook the middle path,
 ' where truth, and right, and safety lie, and center in one,
 ' or other of these dangerous excesses. When they have a
 ' notion of any thing as highly absurd and injurious, they
 ' seem bewildered, and know not where to stop; and the
 ' force of their prejudices pushes them on to an equal ex-
 ' treme. In order to keep, at the utmost possible distance
 ' from

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‘ from error, they fly likewise from the truth.’ To which I sincerely wish Dr. F. may wisely return, and *inflexibly adhere*; before it be too late wholly to prevent the fatal injury, which his *flying from the truth* is likely to produce.

XVIII. ‘ Let us, my brethren, to shew us christians, be careful to pursue quite opposite measures of conduct. Let us root out of our minds all narrowness of temper, all the seeds of censoriousness and of bitter uncharitable zeal. Let us cultivate an esteem of all our brethren, and an ardent concern for their welfare. Let us bear with their errors, and treat their weaknesses with tenderness and condescension. Let us encourage and comfort their minds, and, by our moderation and candour, assist their progress in the christian life. Let us express no contempt of them for their inferior attainments, and carefully avoid arrogance, and contentious emulation. Let not our kind regards be confined to the particular society, of which we ourselves are members, but extend to the whole household of faith; that in the exercise of that universal charity, which our holy religion recommends, we may have a strong zeal for the general cause of christianity; a compassionate sense of the oppressions and injuries, which our brethren, in any part of the world, groan under; and behave towards them, in all respects, as persons who make up, with us, one spiritual community, under Christ the universal head.’

What this paragraph of the Doctor's contains, let us with cheerfulness, care, and diligence perform, with whatever else the gospel requires or recommends. Let us not renounce our allegiance to our only Lord and Master, *who loved us and died for us*; let us be true and faithful to his cause and institutions; let us not desert, betray, or give up his ordinances in complaisance to any, who are unwilling to obey them. Let us not sell his truth for the favour, esteem, or praise of men; nor for any other consideration whatsoever. Let us not be wavering, nor grow indifferent to it in any particular; but let us be *steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, that our labours therein may not be in vain*. Let us therefore contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints; and practice accordingly; tho' others despise, and reproach us, and every where speak against us, because they differ so widely from us, and from the truth we maintain! But *whereunto we have already attained, let us mind the same things, let us walk by the same rule*. For as the end

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of Christ's being born, and the cause for which he came into the world was to bear witness to the truth, and accordingly he witnessed a good confession before Pontius Pilate; so it will most become us, as his true disciples and followers, to imitate him also in a strict regard to the truth, that we may thereby hold out a light of warning and direction, to all those who err from his precepts and commands. Nor can any of the fundamental principles of the doctrine of Christ, be accounted trifles of no importance, and unworthy of our regard; but ought surely, every one of them, to be strictly observed, inflexibly adhered to, and earnestly contended for: and more especially that which Christ ordained, as the initiating ordinance and way of entrance into his church, tho' it is the most despised of all, and most obstinately opposed by professed christians. This surely must be the best way to encourage a progress in the christian life, by thus inculcating a strict regard to the whole will of Christ, in order to bring men to a full and uniform obedience to our great Lord and Master. Let us therefore do all in the exercise of that universal charity, which our holy religion recommends; for that can never require us to annul or degrade the authority of God in any thing. On the contrary, a compliance with the prejudices of others must of necessity create indifference to Christ, and to the whole of his institution, as a legislator, whose laws may be dispensed with; and, in the end, overthrow and ruin the general cause of christianity: for the preservation of which, in all its parts, the Doctor owns we ought constantly to retain a strong zeal.

XIX. ' Such dispositions, and such a behaviour, are absolutely necessary in order to our receiving, in a right manner, the memorials of the body and blood of the Lord, without which, our remembering his death at his table ever so constantly, and with the greatest seeming devotion, and thinking of him, as our Saviour, with the most warm and vigorous affections, will by no means answer some of the chief and highest purposes of this holy institution. For we cannot demonstrate our gratitude to God, our heavenly father, nor to Christ, the gracious and adorable saviour of our souls, in any other way, than by keeping his commandments, and, especially, by loving one another, as he hath given us commandment; by walking worthy of the vocation, where-with we are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love; and endeavouring to keep the unity of the spirit, in the bond of peace,

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‘ peace.—And may the God of patience, and consolation, grant you to be like minded, one towards another, according to Christ Jesus ; that ye may, with one mind and one mouth, glorify God, even the father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Wherefore receive ye one another ; as Christ also received us, with all our weakneses and involuntary errors, to the glory of the wisdom, and mercy of God.’

As Dr. F. here positively affirms, *That we cannot demonstrate our gratitude to God, our heavenly father, nor to Christ, the gracious and adorable Saviour of our souls, in any other way, than by keeping his commandments ;* so the christian church, must be absolutely inexcusable, and will undoubtedly be guilty of a very heinous sin, when she dispenses with any persons obedience to the least of his known commands, or institutions enjoined in the Gospel. For can there be a higher affront to, or greater dishonour put upon God and Christ, than for the church, openly and arbitrarily, to take upon herself a power, in that way and manner, *to annul and degrade the authority of God our heavenly father, and Christ the gracious and adorable Saviour of our souls ?* Her sin in this must be much greater, and of a far more pernicious consequence, than that of any particular person's neglecting, or even refusing to obey, and to keep Christ's commandments in their own persons ; because she must not only act equally against the dictates of reason, the convictions of conscience, and the express words of Christ ; but also, as her influence is more extensive, so the evil must spread farther, and give an universal sanction to disobedience.

And, if particular persons neglecting, or refusing to *keep the commandments in the Gospel, demonstrates, as the Doctor here says, a want of gratitude in them to God our heavenly father, and to Christ our gracious and adorable Saviour ;* surely *such a disposition and behaviour, must absolutely unfit them for receiving in a right manner, the memorials of the body and blood of the Lord.* For, without such gratitude in our hearts, arising from a just sense of the special benefits of the Gospel, our *remembering Christ's death at his table ever so constantly, and with the greatest seeming devotion, and thinking of him, as our Saviour, with the most warm and vigorous affections, will by no means answer some of the chief and highest purposes of this holy institution.* Let us therefore *have respect unto all Christ's commands ; let us in gratitude to him keep, and do whatsoever he hath commanded us ; let us*
love

love one another as he hath given us commandment; let us walk worthy of the vocation, wherewith we are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love; and endeavouring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace and truth. And, therein, may the God of patience and consolation, grant you to be like minded one towards another, in the truth, according to Christ Jesus, that we may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Wherefore receive ye one another; as Christ also received us, with all our weaknesses and involuntary errors, to the glory of the wisdom and mercy of God; whose institutions are not in any thing to be exceeded, abridged, or amended by man.



CONCLUSION.

Reverend Sir,

I HAVE now gone quite through your Sermon; and, I hope I have fully answered all your pleas for promiscuous mixed communion; which, in my judgment, have no force or evidence in them. But, if your scheme should ever prevail, and be generally practised among christians, it must, in its natural tendency, prove destructive to christianity; unless you can make it appear, that professed christians are under an high and strong obligation to believe, and become obedient to some part of christian duty, and at the same time at full liberty to neglect, to disregard, nay, to despise other parts of the christian institution; and that such sentiments and conduct, are no dishonour to Christ, but well pleasing to God, whose authority is thereby *annulled and degraded*: I say, unless you can support these contradictions, you have been doing an irreparable injury to common christianity; and all your rhetorick and oratory, so pathetically displayed in the many discourses, which you have preached in the course of your lecture, or elsewhere, against the growing and daring infidelity of the age, or, in favour of the christian religion, may very justly be compared to the fine pleasant Appian way, which terminated in a bog. For, had Tindall himself but understood this, he might, by a short sentence or two, easily have baffled you in many important things, which you have

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urged

urged in your answer to him : tho' that valuable defence of christianity, a few things excepted, would, I believe, be unanswerable, had the author of it strictly adhered to his own reasoning, and the arguments therein so forcibly made use of in favour of christianity. But your receding from scripture so very widely, as you have done in the discourse I have here examined, takes of the weight of your reasoning against infidelity, in that work ; many passages of which I might have made use of ; but, finding your Sermon upon Baptism sufficient for my purpose, I chose to omit every thing else. Nor can there be occasion for more, unless I should have a call from you to defend this examination ; which, I am persuaded, will not be the case ; because, I apprehend, you can never get out of the delemma, in which this discourse hath involved you, but by retracting it wholly, or by explaining it in such a manner, as entirely to destroy those sentiments about promiscuous communion, which your complaisance to other christians has unhappily led you into ; and then, as you would wish to be consistent, utterly renouncing and abandoning the practice, into which that unreasonable complaisance has betrayed you.

But I shall now beg leave, to transcribe a few lines, from the conclusion of your answer to *Tindall*, where you very aptly say, ' That *our holy religion* suffers by the ' darkness, and confusion of human schemes, which are ' not only fathered upon *revelation*, but ranked among ' its fundamental, and most important doctrines. And, I ' hope, since this is a common cause (the honour of christianity being evidently concerned in it), *you* will agree to ' lay aside unscriptural subtilties, and distinctive party phrases, ' and be content to represent the christian doctrine just as *we* ' find it in the writings of the New Testament ; and then ' *we* shall have but little to fear from the skill or malice of ' its adversaries. For though some modern scholastic explanations of it may be attended with insuperable difficulties, ' and always distress those who undertake the defence of ' them ; the original revelation itself will, I am persuaded, ' stand the test of reason, and bear even a severe and critical, ' provided it be likewise an honest, and impartial examination.

— ' It may therefore be justly presumed, that whatever ' other works of this kind the ingenious author may be engaged in, they will not divert him from the more necessary business of reviewing, upon all proper occasions, what ' he has already written ; and, that having appealed in it to ' the

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* the judgment of the publick, he will not expect to be believed implicitly; but think himself obliged either to defend it, or else, in a frank open manner, acknowledge his mistakes, like an honest man, and sincere lover of truth.

And you know, Sir, * that such an ingenuous and open conduct has something so great, so praise-worthy and generous in it, that almost all will find themselves constrained by nature, and the universal ingrafted sentiment of what is right and excellent, to approve, what but few have the piety and resolution to imitate *.

But, if you attempt to vindicate this Sermon, or to defend your practice, you will most assuredly weaken at least, if not entirely destroy among your followers, and many others, that high regard, which every professed christian ought to have for Christ, our only Lord and Master; whom as such, it is their indispenfible duty to believe, and to obey in every thing. Instead of a strict obedience to Christ, your admirers will only be led to think contemptibly of him, as a weak legislator, not worthy in every thing to be regarded. And hereby, you will determine the doubtful and wavering, and confirm them, with every professed deist, in their unbelief; and will your self be justly looked upon, I do not say as the patron, but as the great promoter of infidelity; to the ruin of the christian cause, the best and most excellent dispensation, which God ever bestowed upon mankind: consequences, I am well satisfied, the farthest from your pious and upright intentions, but the natural effect of your good nature and too easy complaisance.

My sincere wishes are, that you may now act the part becoming a faithful minister of the gospel, consistent with what you have at any time advanced, in favour of scripture-truth, and for the interest of *primitive and unadulterate christianity*. I remain,

Reverend Sir, your, &c.

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• My Remarks, p. 3.

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AN EXTRAORDINARY FONDNESS for some darling opinion, does often prevent a due attention to what is urged against it. Whether this has been the case with Dr. F. I shall not pretend to say. But, that my readers may see, in what light the arguments against mixt communion were stated, and presented to him six years ago, and never, that I know of, censured as inconclusive, or found fault with by him, I have thought it not improper, to reprint here two or three pages of my remarks on the several answers to the Pamphlet, intitled, *Christianity not founded on Argument*, p. 5.

But, where our differences consist not merely in speculation, or the bare assent of our minds to any scripture truth ; but also in matters of practice, or the manner, in which religious duties are to be performed, as the ordinances of God, and as the appointments of Christ himself, there our different and contrary proceedings must necessarily create confusion and disorder. Besides, it would be most unreasonable to expect, that any man should openly countenance, and give publick sanction to the performance of any act in the name of the Lord ; which his conscience assures him is no other than a mere human appointment, or superstitious institution, whereby that of Christ is entirely subverted, and made of no effect. In this case therefore every conscientious Christian must be so far from openly countenancing, or giving publick sanction to such proceedings, that, on the contrary, his duty to God, and his allegiance to Christ, oblige him to bear a faithful testimony against all such corruptions, in order to maintain and uphold the authority of Christ, the honour and dignity of his laws, the restoration and establishment of the purity and truth of his institutions ; and, as far as in him lies, the reformation of his brother from the error of his ways. And we are the more obliged to this, with respect to baptism, in that our Pædo-baptist brethren cannot but justify us in our administration of that sacred ordinance, by acknowledging it was the primitive practice, the way by which believers were initiated in the apostles days ; and as they cannot produce any divine authority for the alterations by them introduced, their own practice is at best no other than a church, I had like to have said Popish, tradition. And therefore, as I have shewn at large in my supplement, it is not we, but they themselves, who make the separation. They force us from them, and it is at their door only, that the sin of schism must lie ; because two things Christ himself has made essential to the constitution

tion of, and gathering of members into, his church. One is a firm belief of this great foundation article of the christian faith, that he is *Christ the Son of the living God*; for *upon this rock*, says he, *I will build my church: and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it*, Matt. xvi. 16; on which see my supplement, p. 12. The other is, that such believers *be born of water and of the spirit*, without which, he assures us, *no man can see, or enter into, the kingdom of God*; on which see my first letter, and also Dr. *Whitby* and Mr. *Benson*, as quoted in my preface.

These therefore ought to be strictly observed, and punctually complied with by every Christian; and must also be inflexibly adhered to, and inviolably maintained by the christian church: which therefore she ought not to dispense with, so far as to admit persons to the rights and privileges thereof, who do not profess to believe the one, and have not manifested that faith in Christ, with their resolution of obedience to him, by submitting to the other; because all such persons are hereby strictly excepted or prohibited by Christ himself. For a society of Christians therefore to receive unbaptized persons into their communion would be to countenance their unbelief and disobedience, and with respect to themselves, may be esteemed a despising the authority of Christ, a betraying, or giving up his institution, and a casting off their allegiance to him. And in the event, it would be so far from preventing reflections, and hindering deists from attacking christianity, that by our thus sapping one or two of the *foundation principles of the doctrine of Christ*, Heb. vi. 1, 2. and of our own selves taking away the fences, and destroying the very boundary which Christ himself has made, which I apprehend would be the consequence of such an unnatural or unjustifiable union, we should thereby give infidels a much greater advantage against us, and our holy religion, than they can possibly have from the continuance of our distinct and separate communions.

For when deists observe, that Christians themselves make so very little account of Christ's most solemn institutions, or of the right administration of them, they may thence infer, and be led to think themselves fully justified in rejecting, or shewing as light an esteem for his doctrines; since if he was divinely inspired, and really came from God, all that he delivered, must be equally observed by his professed disciples and followers, who, as such, can never be absolved from a most strict and careful regard, and obedience to the whole of his institutions. Nor is it their duty to have this regard to Christ's institutions themselves only, but also to promote the
same

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same in others so far as they are able; which those Christians are very far from doing, who pretend that *professors of all denominations*, nay, that *persons unbaptized, may all communicate, or eat bread, and drink wine together at the Lord's table in remembrance of Christ*: which opinion, big with many evils, is neither founded on the word of God, nor the practice of the church in any age; nor yet upon the reason and nature of things, but only upon mere complaisance, under the false notion of manifesting their charity to other Christians. But surely our love and regard are due to Christ, to his institutions and laws, more than to any man, or body of men whatsoever; and therefore it must be very unjustifiable in us, to give up the former, for the sake of the latter, because, *he that loveth father, or mother, wife, or children, brethren, or sisters, or any thing, even his own life, more than Christ and his ways, is not worthy of him*, Matt. x. 32—39. Luke xiv. 25—31. And, p. 84, surely those churches, which have carried the reformation so far, as not to give the least handle to Deists, by an open neglect of, or by making any unwarrantable alterations in, Christ's most solemn institutions, ought as carefully to avoid giving the most distant occasion for saying, That tho' we are baptized ourselves, yet we countenance other Christians in an open neglect of Christ's ordinance, by communicating with them at the Lord's table; notwithstanding we know, and believe in our own consciences, they never were baptized according to Christ's appointment. For this, perhaps, may be said to look too much like renouncing our own baptism, and may by infidels be thought no less than a tacit acknowledgment, that tho' we own Christ for the legislator of his church; yet there is not so much regard due to his laws and institutions, as Christians sometimes pretend. And since we live in an age of most free inquiry, it will highly become all Christians to follow this advice of *Minucius Felix*; 'Let us make a good use of the blessing of divine truth, let us govern our knowledge with discretion, let superstition and impiety be no more, and let true religion triumph in their stead.' Which God grant may be the happy issue of these debates!

The



The Letter referred to in the Address.

Reverend Sir,

W H E N you was so kind, as to let me have that Sermon to read, which you preached at the baptism of Mr. B——, and also gave me leave to transcribe it; you was so good as to tell me, *I might make use of any passages in it without making any references.* I have strictly observed your order; and, at the same time, made as much use of the liberty you gave me, as I possibly could; though I should have been very glad to have distinguished your words from my own, by placing commas at the beginning and end of each passage: but fearing, that such marks might be interpreted, as a reference to something, I was obliged, tho' greatly against my will, to omit even that distinction; which I have made use of to my own words, where I was forced to supply what was wanting in your copy.

As you forbid my *making any references* to you, I was obliged to leave out the text, and in two places some few words besides, that it might not appear as a Sermon, which would have been very improper; but every where else I have carefully retained your own expressions, excepting one scripture, where I have given the text at large.

I hope you will not be displeased with me for what I have done, tho' I have extended the liberty you gave me, much farther, perhaps, then you might imagine I would. For the publick had reason to expect the Sermon from you long ago, as you promised several of our brethren, soon after it was preached, that *you would print it.* This has been hitherto neglected, and therefore, as I thought it the right of truth, I could not help making use of the liberty, you gave me; because I apprehend, you had wholly laid aside the thoughts of printing it.

The first time I saw you at your lodgings, after I came to town again; I told you *I had made some use of the liberty you*
gave

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gave me in two or three places, but without making any references, and if you had in the least desired it, I would have shewn you my manuscript, but as you did not request that, nor put any questions to me about it, I did not think my self obliged to say any more.

The book I here present you, is the first I could get made up. You will find my two letters to Mr. —, with what follows your own words in my introduction, and the close of my remarks upon Dr. *Benson*, contain my sentiments about mixed communion: all which I submit to your candour, and serious perusal, sincerely wishing, that the great God may deliver you from every snare, and keep you from doing any thing, which, in the consequences, may be in the least injurious to the interest of truth, the cause of our great Lord and Master, or to your own character; which, I am persuaded, both your own, and the avowed enemies of revelation would greatly rejoice in, and improve against yourself and christianity in general, to the utmost of their power.

I will add no more, but only to assure you, that I am with the most profound esteem and real respect,

Reverend Sir,

Your very much obliged Friend,

and very humble Servant,

London, Nov. 27, 1744.

G. Killingworth.

F I N I S.



P O S T.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE beginning of the introduction to my remarks on the several answers to the Pamphlet, intitled, *Christianity not founded on Argument*, unto the three last lines of page 3, is the beginning of Dr. Foster's sermon on baptism, so often referred to in this examination. And the only variations from his copy are; p. 2. before line 10. add, to whom alone I am now addressing my discourse; p. 3. instead of, *The ordinance of baptism*, which are the first words of my third paragraph, the Doctor's words are, 'The duty, which, upon the present occasion, I am more particularly led to consider and explain, is one of that sort, to which I have now been endeavouring, briefly to recommend and enforce obedience, &c.' l. 33. for *christians*, read, us now; l. 34. I place the word *calmly*, which in his copy is two lines after, thus, let us proceed calmly and with, instead of which, I have said, Let *them* with; My paragraph ends with the word formed, but his runs on thus, 'And all that is necessary to be offered for the compleat illustration of this subject, will fall in naturally under one or other of these heads of inquiry.' But in my remarks it stands thus, p. 86. And, *I think*, all that is necessary for a sufficient, if not the compleat illustration of this subject may be reduced to one, &c.; p. 87. l. 5. for *scripture* expression, read, expression used in the text; and l. 8. add, of that most wise, and holy, and excellent scheme of religion; p. 88. l. 31. dele, *their*; l. 34, 35. for, *Of this* Gal. iii. 27. in particular, read The text itself; l. 41. for *this*, read the; p. 89. l. 23. for *in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*, read, &c.; and p. 92. instead of the scripture at length the Doctor's words are, If says this great apostle, ye be circumcised, ye become debtors to the whole law (which law ran in this fearful rigid strain, cursed is every one, that continueth not in all things, which are written in the book of the law do to them) Christ is of no effect unto you, Christ will profit you nothing, and ye are fallen from grace; p. 94. l. 18. for *St. Paul*, read the text; p. 95. l. 5. dele *Acts* xxii. 16. and after conclude, add this discourse. But all that is between *difficulty*, p. 87. to *this is sufficient*, p. 88. is wholly my own, the Doctor having not written any thing, but delivered what he said upon that point *extempore*. These are the places, to which my last letter refers, and thus corrected, my readers have, in my remarks, the Doctor's own words intire, as I received the Sermon from him. This I thought proper the public should be informed of, to prevent any imputation of my altering or injuring the Doctor's sense, which I have most conscientiously avoided.



POSTSCRIPT.

AFTER I had finished my examination of Dr. Foster's Sermon, I met with another wild imagination, in a letter, contrived to encourage, and calculated to promote, the same purposes of promiscuous communion, in these words :

‘ That, at the first institution of the Holy Supper, it seems probable to me, that our blessed Saviour administered it to none, that had received Christian Baptism : for that the twelve Apostles then had not, is I think very evident ; the true christian baptism was not a christian ordinance ; nor was it possible therefore that it should be administered to any, till after our Lord’s resurrection and ascension into heaven : — *that* Christ’s own baptizing (—) and the baptism which his disciples administered — was only a baptism into the belief of the Messiah to come : — and if this be true ; that baptism is not at all times, and in all cases, absolutely necessary to church membership, must be a point decided beyond all just exception.’

But this, surely, must be for want of duly considering the scriptures, and the nature of things. We have a maxim, I believe, universally allowed to be true, by all faithful Protestants ; *viz.* that *every thing which is new in religion is false*. Now, besides the novelty of this opinion, and its carrying in it a charge, that neither the apostles of our Lord, nor any other christians, who have lived since their times, ever understood the nature and extent of Christ’s institutions, till the inventor of this supposition, it is also attended with several other gross absurdities ; namely, that true christian baptism was not a christian ordinance, till after Christ’s resurrection and ascension into heaven : that the baptism, which Christ himself practised, and which his disciples administered by his order, to those whom he himself converted, was not true christian baptism : that, tho’ Christ himself preached the gospel of the kingdom, and declared it to be erected ; though he converted many to this belief ; though he

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gave the most convincing and undeniable proofs of his being the expected Messiah; yet the Messiah was not come: that, though his disciples and followers owned him for the *Son of God, and King of Israel, the Messiah, of whom Moses in the Law and the Prophets did write*, John i. 44, 45, 49, being convinced thereof by his personal presence, preaching, and miracles; yet they could not believe what they professed, but only believed in the Messiah to come: that, though Christ's disciples heard him preach with greater power and *authority than the Scribes*, and saw his person, and the wonderful and most surprising miracles which he wrought, to confirm his Messiahship, by a touch of his garment, of his hand, or by a word speaking; though, they knew him so well as to follow him from place to place, and he owned himself to be the Messiah; yet it was all delusion, they were not to believe their senses, for the Messiah was not come. Nay, according to this supposition, the Messiah was not come, when he instituted the holy supper, nor when he went away from his disciples, and left them, never more to appear amongst them till thousands of years after, in the latter age of the world; and consequently he is not yet come. These are some of the absurdities and contradictions, though many more might be enumerated, which naturally arise from this novel opinion, that Christ's own baptism, which was given to those he himself converted, *was no other than John's baptism, into the belief of the Messiah to come*. But let us consider the difference between the baptism of John and that of Christ.

John was only the fore-runner, *to prepare the way of the Lord, and make ready a people to receive his ministry, and submit to his institutions*. His baptism therefore must, of necessity, be only into the belief of the Messiah to come, or about to appear; because, John himself did not know who the Messiah was, till the time of his baptism, when he saw the *Holy Ghost descending and remaining on him*, John i. 29—33. *I knew him not*, says he, *but that he should be made manifest to Israel; therefore am I come baptizing with water*. The great ends of John's baptism are here clearly expressed. And as he was *to prepare the way, to make ready, and dispose people to receive the Messiah*; so he directed, or taught his disciples, to submit to Christ's baptism, Luke iii. 16—18, saying, as St. Paul expresses it Acts xix. 3, 5, *that they should believe on him that should come after him*, and enforcing their belief in, and obedience to Christ, by the strongest motives, even the hopes of *eternal life*, and declaring the punishment which would be inflicted for their disobedience, that they

they should not see life, but the wrath of God would abide on them, John iii. 33—36. Luke iii. 16—18. And this preaching and exhortation of John did naturally lead his disciples to receive Christ's baptism, as soon as he appeared, and wherever he baptized. And in the land of Judea, as well as in Galilee, or other places, Christ tarried with his disciples and baptized, having before taught the necessity of baptism, in order to persons becoming members of his church or kingdom. In particular, he solemnly assured Nicodemus, that, without it, no man could see, or enter into the kingdom of God then set up. And this preaching of John, and of Christ, had the proper effect, as appears, from what some of the disciples of John said to their Master, John iii. 22—26. Rabbi, He that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold the same baptizeth, and all men come to him, John's disciples as well as others, John i. 37. Such was Christ's success, and so great the number he baptized, that, when the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard, that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John, to prevent the evil, which their perverseness might occasion, he left Judea, and departed again into Galilee, John iy. 1, 3.

That Christ's baptism was distinct, and in some respects different, from that of John's, appears from hence; that, as John's baptism was given in the belief of the Messiah to come, one in whom they were to believe, and to whose baptism they were to submit, when he appeared; so it was also administered, without the promise of the Holy Ghost. This is plain from the account we have of those, who, a long time after their baptism, had never heard of the Holy Ghost, Acts xix. 2. On the contrary, as the works which Christ did, were performed in his father's name, and he spoke nothing, but as the father gave him commandment; so, his baptism being administered in his father's name, they, who believed him to be the Messiah and Son of God already come, received the Holy Ghost, as may fairly be gathered from Matt. x. 1. Luke iii. 16. Ch. ix. 1, 2. Ch. xi. 17—20. John i. 33. Acts i. 4, 5.

Moreover, Christ's baptism must necessarily have been given in the belief of the Messiah already come, and that he himself was that Messiah. For had it, like John's baptism, been given in the belief of a Messiah to come, as this wild pretence supposes, it had been a plain declaration to all men, that Jesus Christ was not the Messiah. Hence therefore it necessarily follows, that there was no real difference, between Christ's baptism, or the baptism which his disciples administered by his order, during his ministry, to such as he himself

self converted, and the baptism, which the apostle's administered to such as they converted, after their Lord's ascension into heaven. And if any baptism, that ever was administered, claims the title of *true christian baptism*, certainly it must be due to that, which was given by Christ himself, or in his presence, and by his authority, to such as were converted, by his own preaching and ministry. The commission therefore, *Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.* is not the first institution of *true christian baptism*, as is here pretended; but was only a renewing and enlarging that sacred institution, with which Christ began his own ministry, a little before *John* was imprisoned; *Matt. xi. 2.* though, at that time, given to none but those of the *Jewish* nation, because Christ, in his own person, was not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, *Matt. xv. 24.* And to them only he limited the commission which he gave his Apostles, when he first sent them forth to preach the Gospel, *Matt. x. 5, 6.* So that, after his resurrection, when all power in heaven and in earth was given to him, and, as foretold, the heathen for an inheritance, it was necessary to renew, and enlarge the commission, under which his disciples had before acted, when they administered baptism to the *Jews* only, by extending their authority, to preach the gospel to the *Gentiles* also, and to baptize those, who believed throughout the whole world, *Matt. xxviii. 19, 20. Mark xvi. 16. Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.* The giving baptism therefore to the *Gentiles*, as well as to the *Jews*, seems to me the only difference, between what was administered by Christ or his disciples before his sufferings, and that, which his apostles administered, after his ascension into heaven.

In order for christian church membership and communion, this letter allows, 'That *John's* baptism was by no means sufficient; since we read, that *St. Paul* at *Ephesus* re-baptized those, who had been baptized by *John*, and has thereby given it as his opinion, that *John's* baptism and Christ's baptism were two different institutions, *Acts xix. 3, 4, 5.*

This difference between these two institutions is plainly the reason, why *John's* disciples became obedient to Christ's baptism, according to the directions *John* himself had given them, and which, *St. Paul* here urges, as the reason for their being rebaptized. But, as we have not the least hint, that any persons, whom Christ or his disciples baptized by his order

order before his sufferings, were ever rebaptized, after his ascension, nor the least circumstance, to support such a thing; it plainly confirms, what I before observed, that the baptism, which Christ or his Apostles administered during his own ministration to the Jewish nation, was the very same with that which, by *Matth. xxviii. 19, 20*, they were commanded to administer, to believers of all nations throughout the world.

That Christ's baptism was different from, more compleat, and perfect than that of *John's*, may justly be supposed, from the multitude of proselytes, who became obedient to Christ's baptism, and the great decline of the followers of *John*, that little time he continued to minister, after Christ entered upon his ministry. For, as soon as *John* knew who the Messiah was, by this sign from heaven, *On whom thou shalt see the Holy Ghost descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost*; he testified and bare witness to him before all the people that he was the Christ the Lamb of God, *John i. 15—36. Ch. iii. 26—36*. And thus, having fully answered the end of his being sent, as the forerunner, that Christ might be made manifest to Israel, to prepare, and make ready a people for the Lord, his ministry was soon after put an end to, by *Herod's* shutting him up in prison, *Luke iii. 16—20. Mark i. 14. Matt. iv. 12—17*.

It cannot therefore be supposed, that our blessed Saviour administered the holy supper to none, who had received christian baptism; or, that the twelve Apostles were never baptized at all. For, Christ had long before positively asserted, that a man cannot enter into his church or Kingdom, except he be born of water and of the spirit, *John iii. 5*; which words, this writer seems to allow, have a reference to baptism. Besides, in the nature of things, there was more reason for the Apostles to be baptized, than for Christ himself to be baptized; for, as he would not omit obedience to the divine appointment in any thing, *Matth. iii. 15*, so it cannot be supposed, he would countenance the neglect thereof in his Apostles. There was as much occasion for them to be baptized, as for the multitudes which we read of in the 3d and 4th chapters of *John*, or as there was to rebaptize the disciples of *John*, *Acts xix. 3, 4, 5*.

Again, *St. Paul* was called and chosen to be an apostle by Christ himself, as well as the twelve; but yet, at the same time, his obedience to baptism was set before him, as a necessary duty, *Acts ix. 6—18*. And, as Christ had taught the necessity of baptism, in order to membership or admission in

mission into his Church ; so St. *Peter* and the other apostles told the *Jews*, that they must *every one of them be baptized*, Acts ii. 38. Accordingly the angel of God told *Cornelius*, he should hear from *Peter*, *what he ought to do* : and though the devout *Cornelius* and his friends had the Holy Ghost given them in an extraordinary manner and degree, yet *Peter* commanded them to be baptized with water, Acts x. 6, 22, 44, 48 : by which we know, *form* in this case *must not give way to substance*. Nor is there a syllable in scripture, which leads us to think otherwise, or that one single unbaptized person was ever admitted to the communion and privileges of Christ's church or Kingdom. Christ said to the Pharisees, *the Publicans and Harlots go into the kingdom of God before you* ; but *the Pharisees and Lawyers rejected the Counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of John*, Matt. xxi. 31. Luke vii. 28—30. And much more sinful, surely, must be a rejecting the baptism of Christ, who gave a much greater evidence of his high commission and authority to baptize, by doing *the works that none other man did*, John xv. 24.

Moreover, this letter says, ' That immediately after the institution of christian baptism, — it was absolutely necessary (—) to a man's being a true member of the Kingdom or Church of Christ, — because without it, a person could scarce, at that time, be really and consistently a christian. Baptism was proposed and enjoined, as equally a doctrine and institution of christianity, with any other doctrine or institution of it ; the rejecting it therefore, was directly opposing, and openly renouncing the authority of Christ and his apostles, — and no man could be a christian, or deserve to be owned as a christian, who refused to submit to their authority. And farther,

' That, as far as appears from the New Testament history, none in the apostolic age were received to the christian communion, but those who were baptized, *i. e.* previously baptized by immersion, upon a personal profession of repentance and faith. — Baptism by immersion always preceded the being received to communion.' The apostles, therefore, must be baptized, before the communion was instituted, or they would not have been admitted to it. But it adds still farther,

' That baptism is of perpetual obligation in the christian church, and the regular way of admission into it ; — that the first christians actually were, *by one spirit, all baptized*
' into

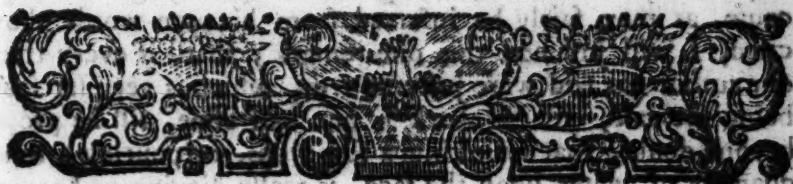
into one body ; and finally, that Christ gave himself for the Church, that he might sanctify and cleanse it by the washing of water, or by baptism.

These are great concessions, and all that is said to take of the force of them is but groundless, and taking things for granted, which may be justly denied, and are fully answered in the foregoing examination. The method of framing duties by inferences, is here condemned, and the writer advises, to admit of nothing, as a duty, without the express command and institution of Christ himself, and this matter, he says, will be wholly decided. In this I readily acquiesce ; for he must then throw up all his inferences, and, instead thereof, produce the express command and institution of Christ himself, for the churches receiving unbaptized persons to christian church membership and communion ; and till this be done, by his own confession, it can neither be the duty of unbaptized persons, though ever so devout and good, to partake of the holy communion ; nor can it be ever the duty of the true christian church to admit any such into membership and communion with her. For this would be to dispense with, to repeal, or annul Christ's express command and institution, appointed by him to continue even to the end of the world ; to frame duties by inferences, and to admit of things as such, without the express command and institution of Christ himself. And thus, I think, this matter is by himself wholly decided against himself, beyond all just exception.

Much more might be offered, to shew still farther the inconsistency and weakness of this letter ; but what has been remarked, is, I think, more than sufficient, to convince any man, how wild and groundless the imaginations are which it contains.



A P P E N -



APPENDIX.

THERE having lately appeared a Pamphlet, entitled, *The Baptism of Infants a reasonable Service*; I could not help looking into a piece, that bore so strange a title. And on reading it, I very soon found, that there is a wide difference between names and things, it being one thing to assert and another to prove; and that this author, like many others of the party, has repeated some things with the same assurance, as if no reply had ever been given to them, wisely taking no notice of the answers, the better to conceal them from his readers.

I have indeed, for a long time, been convinced, that some persons seem to think their opponents are obliged to answer every, the most impertinent conceit and trifling objection, which their prejudices can suggest, or their cunning invent, in order to avoid, or excuse themselves from obeying a plain institution of Christ; whilst at the same time they seem quite unconcerned about taking any notice, much less answering the arguments urged against them. And this seems to be the determination of our author, who says, * *he delights not in controversy; nor intends to engage in any on the subject of these papers, having seldom seen good arising from altercations of this kind.* These strange expressions are not very consistent with a *reasonable service*. For why did he print at all? Does he expect to be implicitly believed? Is he determined not to regard any thing written for his conviction? Or, is he conscious that his papers are indefensible, and therefore gives up the cause before-hand, from the experience he has had, that it never gained any thing by our answers; but, that the pleas and pretences of his party always lost their force with such, as were disposed to consider our arguments with any degree of

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* Preface, p. vi.

impartiality? However, though he has plainly given up the cause, as may fairly be inferred from his own words above cited, I will just add this one remark; that, if every thing our author has said were just and true, which is very far from being the case, yet his work is but half done, till he prove, beyond doubt, that sprinkling a few drops, or pouring a small quantity of water upon the face, is really dipping or burying the whole body under that element.

With respect to the matter and manner of this pamphlet, it contains a number of deductions from dark and obscure, from contrary, yea, even from false and merely imaginary premises; so that, either by not understanding, or else by grossly perverting the scriptures, our author has not represented the christian religion, in an amiable and worthy light, as a clear, plain, and intelligible rule of faith and worship, suited to the meanest capacities, whereby persons honestly disposed, and free from prejudices, may easily understand and know their duty. On the contrary, the difficulty of finding out from scripture what our author supposes the universal duty of all christians makes it a rule, in every respect, unlike the representation I have given above, or what the Prophet *Isaiah* speaks of, ch. xxxv. 8. *an high way shall be there, and it shall be called the way of holiness — the wayfaring men though fools shall not err therein.* For in a just view of things, with respect to infant baptism being the duty of christians, the scriptures would be so far from being such a guide in religion, as is easy to be understood, and every way suitable to the capacities of all mankind, that from the beginning to the end of the New Testament, there is not the least mention of this practice, which now universally prevails among some christians. And the arguments, by which this author would support it, never were, nor ever could have been, found out, understood, and comprehended from that rule only, even by the wisest, most learned, or most zealous Pædo-baptists, if they had really been guided and directed by it, as they pretend to be.

The thing he pleads for is so far from being there plainly revealed to every christian, that what he urges for its support, and to enforce a regard to it, appears visibly enough to be the production of all the art, study, and contrivance of the whole party, ever since their first existence, and coming off from the apostate church of Rome with that corrupt practice; of which they are still so fond and tenacious, that they seem equally as averse to a reformation from it, as the Pope himself can possibly be from any thing, that his church has espoused,

espoused, at the expence of gospel-truth. And by writing and pleading for it, as they do, they shew themselves rather disposed to encourage popery and infidelity, than to part with their gross superstition, and irrational corruption of Christ's most holy institution. Nay, notwithstanding the fatal consequences of it, which have been not only pointed out, but plainly set before them, in my *Supplement to the Sermons preached against Popery at Salter's Hall*, p. 6. p. 68, and in my *Remarks on the several Answers to the Pamphlet, intitled, Christianity not founded on Argument*, p. 7. p. 84; and notwithstanding the clear light which has so often been held out to them, by those of our persuasion: yet they are always endeavouring to work up their misguided zeal for that Popish practice into something plausible, in order to satisfy the scruples of those, who are easily caught by such unscriptural delusions.

But our author himself, with all the assistance he could gather from the whole party, seems not to understand any thing of the terms of *what they call* the Abrahamic covenant, on which their whole scheme depends, any more than those, who have written before him on the same subject. Nor does it appear from their writings, that they have once considered the dealings of God with the seed of Abraham, according to the promise therein made, that he would *be a God to him, and to his seed after him in their generations*; namely, that he would always so oblige, or compel them to acknowledge him for their God, that if they revolted and turned to idolatry, he would not leave them to continue in it, as the heathen nations, but his judgments should assuredly follow them, till they returned to him, called upon, worshiped, and owned him only for their God; because, in regard to *Abraham's* piety, God chose them *above all the families of the earth to place his name amongst them*.

And the words of the covenant are so far from being restrained or limited to *Abraham's* infant seed, as our author most weakly and absurdly supposes, that, on the contrary, the promise made, and the obedience therein required, is only applicable to the adult seed of *Abraham*; which is, perhaps, the just sense of that term every where, throughout the *Old and New Testaments*. For a true born *Jew* of sixty or eighty years of age is, undoubtedly, as much the seed of *Abraham*, as an infant of eight days old can possibly be. And therefore, as adults are the only capable subjects of the promise made, and the injunction given; so, if the terms were not so strictly limited to them only, *they* must necessarily be understood, as

meant and intended therein. And these words of limitation *in their generations*, do so clearly and plainly exclude infants, as infants, from being once supposed the proper subjects of the promise, and obedience there stipulated, that nothing but the distress of our Pædo-baptist brethren, for want of something better to uphold their cause, could ever make them fix upon a sense, so contrary to the plain obvious meaning of the text, as they frequently do; because, the terms are so strictly guarded, against any such construction as they absurdly put upon the words, that it looks as if the divine wisdom, upon foreseeing their spirit and disposition, had taken all due care to prevent the evil of making void his laws and institutions, under the christian dispensation, by any such corrupt traditions, as have been introduced and pleaded for from hence.

But let us recite what our Pædo-baptist brethren call the *Abrahamic* covenant, whole and entire, without omitting any part of it, as our author has done, *Gen. xvii. 1—14*. The first paragraph to ver. 8. must, I think, refer to the covenant which God had before made with *Abraham*. For the first verse of it expresses that sincere piety and uprightness, which God expected from, and had before found in *Abram*, as the condition and motive for his making a new covenant with him, and renewing the promise of *multiplying him exceedingly*, recited in the second verse. The third verse records *Abram's* reverence of God, by then falling down on his face, and paying him that homage and worship, which was suitable to his former ready obedience to the divine command, when God said to him, *Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, and come into the land, which I shall shew thee, Acts vii. 3*. The fourth verse, with the last clause of the third, shews God's acceptance of it, by his *talking with him*, and referring to the covenant before actually made with him; *as for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations*, which includes the promise of *a great nation*, and *a blessing to all families of the earth*, *Gen. xii. 2, 3*. And this is still more fully expressed, and confirmed to him, by the change of his name to *Abraham*, ver. 5. And in the sixth verse still farther additions are made to it of *exceeding fruitfulness*, and that *Kings* should descend from him; and all this as the reward of his piety and faithful obedience to God; which plainly points out the condition, upon which his seed after him should also be accepted. The seventh verse makes that covenant lasting and durable to *Abraham*, and to his natural descendants, or seed after him, that the Almighty God would

be a God to him, and to his seed after him. But to what seed? Not to the infant, but to the adult seed in their generations. For an infant of eight days old is utterly incapable of choosing, or worshipping any God, and therefore *Jehovah*, the Lord, is never said to be, as our author pretends, the God of infants in any sense, because of their moral incapacity for knowing or acknowledging him. And besides, a generation of infants is a contradiction in terms. The eighth verse, from the promise of temporal blessings, *A great name*, and a land unnamed, fixes expressly upon the land of *Canaan*, that it should be the portion and inheritance of *Abraham*, and his seed after him, that is to say, his natural descendants, for an everlasting possession in their generations, as before expressed. Now infants only eight days old are incapable of taking, enjoying, or keeping possession of any land or country; and therefore, as such, they are none of the subjects to whom, in their generations, God here absolutely declares, *I will be their God*, or that they shall be compelled to own and acknowledge him for their God; because, as was before hinted, in regard to *Abraham's* piety, God at this time chose them, before all the families of the earth, to place his name amongst them. And that only the adult seed of *Abraham* were here intended, most clearly appears from the injunction and command, which God required obedience unto, in the ninth verse, where the covenant of circumcision begins, (which verse is wholly left out in our author's citation) *Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee*, (but when? why,) *in their generations*. But infants eight days old are utterly incapable of knowing, and much less capable of keeping any covenant, either with God or man; and therefore cannot be the subjects there intended. God indeed is the common father of all infants, without distinction, as well as of all men; for, as our author says pag. 6, *Infants miserably languish ALL ALIKE, and at last die under the primitive condemnation or judgment*; and *St. Paul* assures us, *there is no respect of persons with God*. He being the parent of the universe, *we are all his offspring*; for in him we live and move and have our being, seeing he giveth to all life and breath and all things, *Acts xvii. 29, 28*. But he is strictly and properly the God of none, but of those, who worship and serve him as their God; for which reason the *Ephesians*, before conversion, are expressly said to be *without God in the world*, *ch. ii. 12*.

The tenth verse declares what the new covenant was, which *Abraham*, and his seed after him in their generations,

was

was to keep and obey God in, namely, *every man child among you shall be circumcised*. This is an act, which no man child, or infant but eight days old is capable of performing; and therefore infants are not the subjects, to whom the command to circumcise was given, but only the creatures, upon whom the proper subjects are here directed to perform that act, in obedience to the divine command. The eleventh verse directs *Abraham*, and his adult seed after him, in their generations, what part they were to circumcise, namely, *The flesh of your foreskin*, and what was to be the proper use, sign, or token of it, in these words, *it shall be a token of the covenant, betwixt me and you* (*Abraham*); both which infants eight days old can neither know, nor perform, and therefore are not the subjects to whom the command is directed.

The twelfth verse expressly fixes the lowest age of the person, whether of *Abraham's* natural descendants, or others bought by him, or by them, on whom the act of circumcision was to be performed; and also the precise time, when the adult seed of *Abraham* were to perform this act of obedience to the divine command upon every man child, which should be born to them, *in their generations*: by which infants can in no sense be understood, any other than as the passive creatures, on whom that act of adult obedience was to be performed.

The thirteenth verse repeats, for substance, what was enjoined, and declared to be the use of circumcision, in the three preceding verses, in order to make the duty still more strong and binding, and that, without any exception, it should be universally performed upon all the dependants of *Abraham*, and of his adult seed *in their generations*. *He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money must needs be circumcised, and my covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant*. The terms here used necessarily restrain, and limit the injunction and command to adult persons only; because, it is impossible that infants of eight days should perform it, or have children, or purchase slaves, on whom to perform the act, or manifest their obedience to this strict law of God.

The fourteenth verse enforces every *Jew's* careful obedience to this law, command, or covenant of circumcision, which God here gave them, from the tie of natural affection, one of the most engaging motives to strict obedience, if they valued the temporal good and the advantages, which their sons might enjoy under the *Jewish* Polity, by positively declaring, that *the uncircumcised man-child,*

child, whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, should be disfranchised, or cut off from enjoying any honour, advantage, or privilege in the state, in common with their brethren. And the people are here directed to disown, and to expel them their societies; in order to deter all parents from violating the divine command, in this covenant made, or law given to *Abraham*, and to his adult seed in their generations, by omitting to circumcise any of their sons, and thereby making themselves a reproach, and doing the child a publick injury. Indeed, from the text it seems plain, that the penalty was not to be inflicted upon the parent, for his sin in breaking God's covenant, by neglecting to circumcise his son, as *Moses* did, *Exod.* iv. 24. 26; though the last words cannot possibly belong to the child, till it came to adult age, and then made his father's sin his own, by remaining uncircumcised, after he knew what God required of him, as a descendant from *Abraham*; since it would be very hard and unreasonable, for a man to be debarred all social privileges with his brethren, and not be allowed the benefit of an heathen proselyte, for his parents fault. And therefore, as the precise time, when the law was to be fulfilled, the eighth day, is not inserted after the word circumcised; so I presume, the son's making his father's sin his own by refusing circumcision, after he knows it to be God's command, that every male should be circumcised, must be the sin, intended in the penalty.

The latter part of the chapter shews *Abraham's* ready and exact obedience to the divine law, in this second covenant, by circumcising himself, his son *Ishmael*, and every other male born in his house, or bought with his money, on the self same day, as God had said unto him, ver. 23. 27; so that *He made haste, and delayed not to keep God's commandments.*

Hence then, upon a fair and strict examination of this xviith chapter of *Genesis*, 1—14, which Pædo-baptists call the *Abrahamic* covenant, it most clearly appears, that God made no covenant with the infant seed of *Abraham*. Nor is there a syllable, to favour the vain, empty pretence, of God's taking them into a peculiar holy covenant relation with him, as is by some strenuously pleaded for.

If it should from hence be argued, that, because God appointed circumcision the seal of the covenant, which he made with *Abraham*, to be performed upon all infants descended from him, intitling them to the possession of the promised land, and the privileges of the *Jewish* state and polity, therefore under the gospel

gospel dispensation, by a parity of reason, baptism may now be applied to all the infants of christians, in order to intitle them to the privileges and blessings of the gospel covenant by Christ Jesus; I reply, that this is a stale pretence, and has been very often answered. For which reason, I shall only add; that when God, in as full and express a manner, commands baptism to be applied to infants, then it will be the duty of christians to have their infants baptized; but it cannot be their duty so to do, before God commands it to be done. For the ordinance of baptism, in the nature of it, cannot answer any of the end, for which circumcision, which required no moral qualifications in the subject, was very suitably adapted, when applied to infants; because, it was, as the apostle says, *a seal of the righteousness of that faith which Abraham had being uncircumcised*; which faith of his, and the obedience resulting from it, recommended him so highly to the esteem and favour of God, that he was pleased to appoint a visible memorial thereof, in the flesh of every male descended from him. And the visible mark or token of this in their flesh, when they came to adult age sufficient to know and understand the reason of it, could not but put them in mind, of that frame and disposition of soul which is most acceptable to God; and so might tend to excite in them a suitable care to please and obey God, in hopes of his acceptance, and continuing them in possession of the promised land, if not of their receiving from him something of the like favours and blessings, bestowed or conferred upon Abraham.

But, as baptism leaves not the least mark or token in the flesh, so it is an ordinance only suited to the state of adult persons, who are capable of the moral qualifications required in scripture of all the subjects of it. And they, who hereby enter into covenant with God, before many witnesses, voluntarily lay themselves under the strongest ties and obligations, to purity and holiness of life. And as the blessings promised to baptism are spiritual and heavenly, while the blessings promised to circumcision were only temporal and earthly; so, from the very great difference that there is between the nature and ends of the two institutions, we clearly see the wisdom of God, in ordaining baptism for adult persons only, though he commanded circumcision to be performed upon all the infants descended from Abraham, if they lived to be eight days old. And, as Dr. Taylor says, * Nothing is more unreasonable, than because God commanded Abraham and his descendants to circumcise their infants, therefore we

* Vide prophesy, p. 230.

‘ of our own heads shall pretend to baptize them without his
 ‘ direction; the conceit is poor and low, and the action
 ‘ consequent to it, bold and venturous: let him do what he
 ‘ pleases with infants, we must not.’ Besides, as he says †
 in another place — ‘ whoever will pertinaciously persist in
 ‘ this opinion of the Pædo-baptists, and practise it accord-
 ‘ ingly, they pollute the blood of the everlasting covenant:
 ‘ they dishonour and make a pageantry of the sacrament:
 ‘ they ineffectually represent a sepulture into the death of
 ‘ Christ, and please themselves in a sign without effect,
 ‘ making baptism like the fig-tree in the gospel, full of
 ‘ leaves, but no fruit; and they invoke the Holy Ghost in
 ‘ vain, doing as if one should call upon him to illuminate a
 ‘ stone or a tree.’

And as our author seems not to understand any thing of the terms of this covenant of circumcision, he seems also to be quite ignorant of the prior covenant, which God made with *Abraham*; though it is the only covenant, from whence *St. Paul* argues and enforces the right of the *Gentile* converts to the promise contained in it, (in opposition to the judaizing christians, who were so glued to the ceremonial law, that they thought the spiritual blessings of the gospel were confined to circumcision, and so could not come upon the *Gentiles* without it) as being only of that faith by which our father *Abram* was justified long before the covenant of circumcision was given, *Gen. xv. 4—6*. For that was given in consideration of *Abram*’s ready faithful obedience to God’s command in the first covenant. And as the covenant of circumcision no where expressly mentions any blessings to descend from *Abraham* upon all nations, or upon *all the families of the earth*; so it could not be the covenant, which the apostle had in view, in both his epistles, where he so successfully opposes the judaizers strong prejudices, founded on the covenant of circumcision.

That our author was quite ignorant of the first covenant, which God made with *Abraham*, before the law of circumcision was given to him and his posterity; or that he did not think it consistent with his views to mention it, is plain from these words, p. 18. ‘ Now, that the promises, or covenant,
 ‘ here referred to, which the apostle affirms to be still in
 ‘ force, and not to be disannulled, must be, and is this co-
 ‘ venant, *Gen. xvii*, into which infants were taken by a
 ‘ visible right, is most evident; because, this is the only
 ‘ covenant, in which God ever made and confirmed
 N pro-

† *Vide Prophecy, p. 244.*

'promises to *Abraham* and to his seed.' But, had he been as intent upon studying what is said in ch. xii. ch. xiii. ch. xv. in order to know the true mind of God, as he appears to be for the support of that Popish corruption, which he seems to be superstitiously fond of, he might have known better; and, that the only covenant, which the apostles regarded as of weight and service to the christian cause, is that which St. *Stephen* in part recites, *Acts* vii. 2, 3, 4. *The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran. And said unto him, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall shew thee. Then came he out of the land of the Caldeans, and dwelt in Charran: and from thence, when his father was dead, he removed him into this land wherein ye now dwell.* But the covenant itself stands thus, *Gen.* xii. 1—4. *Now the Lord said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee. And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing. And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed. So Abram departed, as the Lord had spoken unto him.* He forthwith fulfilled the condition, on his part to be performed, and therefore was intitled to the promises which were made him. This is the covenant, which God himself refers to *Gen.* xvii. 4. *As for me my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations.* All the families of the earth were by that covenant to be blessed in him. And therefore this is the only covenant, which St. *Peter* thought worthy of his notice, when preaching to a multitude of the *Jews*, *Acts* iii. 25. *Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant, which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed.*

This is also the only covenant, which St. *Paul* refers to *Gal.* iii. 6, 8, 17, 18, 21, 22, when he opposed the *Judaizers*, by whom many of the *Galatians* were intangled in that yoke of bondage, the law of circumcision; which obliged them to the strict observation of the whole ceremonial law, and rendered the dispensation of the gospel of Christ unprofitable to them, ch. v. 1—4. That the apostle therefore might remove those delusions, into which they were fallen, and establish them in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, he argues from the merit or superiority of *Abraham's* faith, shewing the excellency thereof above a conformity

armity to the ceremonial law, and then goes back to the original covenant, which gave birth to that faith, and made the first discovery of the great blessings, which were to come upon the *Gentiles* by Christ Jesus, ch. iii. 5, 8. *The scripture foreseeing, or making mention, that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, that is, God foretold or made known unto him the great blessings of the gospel dispensation, saying, In thee shall all nations (or families of the earth) be blessed.* For the covenant, or law of circumcision, which our author weakly imagines to be here intended, is in no respect suitable to the argument, the design, nor the occasion of the epistle. Nor are the words of that covenant, upon which the whole force of St. Paul's reasoning depends, to be found in the xviith; but are first mentioned in Gen. xii. 3, and afterwards repeated in ch. xviii. 18. ch. xxii. 18: in which places there is nothing said of circumcision, as any way belonging to this covenant. Neither is it to be supposed, that the great apostle could ever be so weak, so absurd, and inconsistent, as to argue from the covenant of circumcision, in order to overthrow all regard to circumcision, the chief and principle thing contained in it. But lastly,

This is the covenant which St. Paul prefers before, and opposes to, the covenant of circumcision, in his 4th chapter to the *Romans*, from ver. 9 to 17; because it best answers to the christian dispensation, under which the blessings of forgiveness of sin and acceptance with God are promised to a sincere faithful obedience to the divine command in baptism. For, as at the first call *Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness*, ver. 3; so now, whosoever believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted unto him for righteousness, according to David's description, *Blessed are they, whose iniquities are forgiven, whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.* And our apostle, that he might draw the bigotted Jew entirely off from his superstitious regard to the law or covenant of circumcision, asserts, that the uncircumcised *Gentiles* are equally partakers of this blessedness with the *Jews* themselves; wisely arguing from the first covenant, that faith was reckoned unto Abraham for righteousness long before he was circumcised, or the law that enjoined it was given. For, says the apostle ver. 10, *How was it then reckoned? When he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision?* And then he answers the question both negatively and positively, *not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision.* And in the 11th verse he renders the reason, why it could not be after he

was circumcised, because he received the sign or token of circumcision, as a seal of the righteousness of that faith, which he had whilst he was uncircumcised; and from thence argues the extensiveness of the blessing promised, that it should be bestowed upon all those that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also, and they accounted his children, to the full accomplishment of the promise made, that in him should all families of the earth be blessed. And to this blessing, St. Paul farther assures us, circumcision itself gave no manner of title; because it would be bestowed upon none of the circumcised, as such, but upon those only, who walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had being yet uncircumcised, or before he was circumcised. For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, the person in, or by whom all families of the earth should be blessed, was not to Abram, or to his seed, through the law of circumcision, which was the only law that God gave by him to his posterity; but, on the contrary, through the righteousness of faith. For if they, which are of the circumcision, the law here intended, be heirs, then, faith is made void, and the promise, in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed, made of none effect. Because the law of circumcision, clogged with the ceremonial law, where it is not performed, worketh wrath: but, to the Gentile families, on whom no such law is imposed, there is no transgression of it, to work wrath upon them, as it did against Moses, Exod. iv. 24, 25, 26. And therefore the promise of God to Abraham, that in him should all families of the earth be blessed, is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that seed only, which is of the law of circumcision, but to that seed also, (the uncircumcised Gentiles) which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all, the uncircumcised, as well as the circumcised, on account of that faith, which was worthily, and fitly imputed to him for righteousness. From whence the apostle draws this inference, Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it (faith) was imputed to him; but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.

Thus have I given the just sense, the whole scope, and design of the apostle in this chapter; by which it plainly appears, that the great blessings of the gospel dispensation, preached, foretold, and promised to Abraham, in this short sentence, In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed, are, by

by St. Paul, strictly limited and confined to believers only ; to none but the adult, whether *Jews* or *Gentiles*, who attain to that faith of *Abraham* our father, which leads them to obey God in all his requirements by the gospel of Christ, as *Abraham* himself did in all that God commanded him throughout his whole life.

Infants therefore (excepting the happy means of an early instruction and education in the principles of christianity, with the pious prayers of their parents, or others for them) are, as infants, before the exercise of reason, universally excluded from having any the least concern in the great blessings of the gospel covenant, being absolutely incapable of the conditions or qualifications, which entitle to it, so particularly, fully, and plainly expressed in *Rom. iv. 5. 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 18, 24. Gal. iii. 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, 9, 11, 14, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 29.* Many more texts of the like import might be produced from both these epistles, which when they are carefully attended to, and rightly understood, leave not the least shadow of an argument for infant baptism, but are directly against it. And as, I hope, I have here entirely enervated, and overthrown, what our author calls *the foundation or charter of the church*, the grand basis, on which the superstition of infant baptism is erected ; so I have no occasion, nor will my designed brevity permit me, to follow him so close, as to expose all the weakness and absurdity contained in his pamphlet. This I leave to the worthy gentleman, who occasioned our author's printing it, and who, from the information given me, I am well assured, is much better qualified for the task. I therefore beg his pardon for meddling with it at all ; which I should not have done, but as I was in the press, and knew not how long it might be, before a more particular answer would appear, I was willing to check the evil it might possibly occasion, by letting the world know, that it is a work, not in the least answerable to the title. And I also crave his indulgence, for a word or two to '*the argument from antiquity, or apostolic tradition, which our author says, has not, perhaps, been often presented to the publick, in so contracted and clear a light as its importance deserves. It is principally for the sake of this ; — that the ensuing tract appears.*' Preface, p. v.

But first I would ask ; Does our author prove himself a fair reasoner, by urging, p. 19, 20, the stale pretence, that the word teach in the commission, *Matt. xxviii. 19.* signifies to disciple or proselyte by the act of baptism ; and, at the same time, taking no notice of what Dr. Gale has most learnedly

learnedly and unanswerably said in confutation of it? Or does he shew his ingenuity, when, speaking of the fable of *Jewish* profelyte baptism, he represents it as the *known constant immemorial practice of the church* before Christ; though there is not the least mention, nor most distant hint of any such thing, in the *Old Testament*, the *Apocrypha*, or in the *New Testament*, from whence alone it could possibly be *known* to be the *constant immemorial practice of the church* before Christ? Nay, I may venture to say, that there is not the least mention of such a thing in any writing, from the beginning of the world, till several hundred years after Christ. On the contrary, christian baptism itself was ridiculed, as a new and fanciful ceremony, by some of the most eminent *Jewish* writers, in the age immediately before the first books were written, in which *Jewish* profelyte baptism is supposed to be mentioned. That they had no such practice in Christ's time I have proved from scripture, in my supplement, p. 30 to 35, and in my answer to Mr. *Emlyn*, p. 90 to 99, and have assigned the true reason of its late invention, p. 34. And in the preface of my remarks I have shewn, that no such practice could be, without acting contrary to God's exprefs law, *Exod. xii. 48, 49*, given them by *Moses* and *Aaron*, for circumcising profelytes and their families, which exprelsly says, *one law shall be to him that is home born, and unto the stranger that sojourneth among you.* What then must become of our author's *known, constant, immemorial practice of the church* before Christ? Indeed, to do him justice, he never pretends to prove it, but has only made it appear, that some persons will affirm any thing, which they think may serve their turn. And this one specimen of our author's ingenuity shews the little regard due to his work. What follows is of a piece with it, p. 30. 'The baptism of infants was the undoubted practice of the christian church, in its purest and first ages; the ages immediately succeeding the apostles; who could not but know what the apostles doctrine and practice was as to this matter.'

But our author's *undoubted practice of the christian church, in its purest and first ages*, is so far from being true, that several of the most eminent Pædo-baptists have asserted the contrary. And indeed no just evidence was ever yet produced of any such thing, till about 200 years after Christ. Dr. *Whitby*, a much greater and better writer than our author, says, That Dr. *Gale's* very learned letters prove it to be doubtful and uncertain, whether that practice did constantly obtain *. And Dr. *Barlow*, sometime Bishop of *Lincoln*, in a letter

* *Dissert. de S. Script. interpretatione, prefat. § 5.*

ter ‘ sent to Mr. *I. Tombes*, B. D. upon occasion of his learned disputations concerning the restoration of holy baptism to its primitive use,’ says, * “ I am a friend to your person, (whom I have known, though unknown to you this thirty-one years) and to your opinion too, as to the main of it; for I believe and know, that there is neither precept nor practice in scripture for Pædo-baptism, nor any just evidence for it, for about 200 years after Christ. The first, who bears witness to infant baptism practised in the church, is *Tertullian*, but so, as he expressly dislikes and condemns it, as an unwarrantable and irrational custom. And *Nazianzen*, a good while after him, in his oration *ἐκ ἑγὼς βαπτισμα*, dislikes it too, and would not have infants brought to baptism, till they were of some age, and able to answer for themselves. Sure I am that in the primitive times they were first to be *catechumeni*, and then *φωτισθέντες*, *illuminati*, or *baptizati*, and this not only children of Pagans, or Pagans converted, but children of christian parents, *Nazianzen* (though a Bishop’s son) being not baptized till he was about thirty years of age, as appears in his life; and the like is evident of some others. The truth is, infant baptism did (how or by whom I know not) come in, in the second century, and in the third and fourth began to be practised, though not generally, and defended as lawful from that text (grossly misunderstood) *John* iii. 5. Upon the like gross mistake of *John* vi. 53. they did for many centuries (both in the *Greek* and *Latin* church) communicate infants, and give them the Lord’s Supper, and, I confess, they might do both as well as either: but although they baptized some infants, and thought it lawful so to do, yet *Austin* was the first that ever said it was necessary, *inde durus pater infantum*. I have seen what my learned and worthy friend Dr. *Hammond*, Mr. *Baxter*, and others say in defence of it, and, I confess, I wonder not a little, that men of such great parts should say so much to so little purpose, for I have not yet seen any thing like an argument for it.”

These learned Pædo-baptists plainly shew what regard is due to our author’s assertion, ‘ That the baptism of infants was the undoubted practice of the christian church in its purest and first ages,’ &c. And his first testimony, p. 32. is of a piece with his assertions.

Justin Martyr, he says, wrote about forty years after the apostolic age; but the very apology our author quotes was not writ-

* *Grantham’s Friendly Epist. &c.* p. 11.

written, till after the middle of the second century. And he has translated a passage from him, not according to truth, as he ought, but with a particular view, if possible, to make it serve his own corrupt practice. He has also endeavoured to improve on Dr. Wall's unfairness, by changing childhood into infancy, supposing the last to have the most confined sense; and tho' he has made some atonement for this by adding, *or from*, after the word *in*; yet, at the same time, he would have his readers imagine they are terms synonymous, and mean the same thing. Whereas Dr. Gale says, p. 461 of his reflections, 'The whole stress of what our author advances ——— from these words of St. *Justin*, lies in the sense of the phrase *ἐκ παιδων*; which Mr. Wall, that the passage might serve his turn, has unfairly rendered *in their childhood* (but our author, in or from their infancy.) To convince therefore the most prejudiced, I shall shew the disingenuity of our author's version more largely than so obvious a matter requires; for every body knows well enough that *ἐκ παιδων* signifies not *in* but from their childhood, just as 'tis said of St. *Timothy*, 2 Tim. iii. 15. that from a child, or from his infancy, as it strictly signifies, he had known the holy scriptures; not that it can be thought he understood them in his infancy, (*or in that age to which some people would confine that term*) but only from his infancy he had been trained up in the knowledge of them.'

And after giving instances of the common use of the words from many *Greek* and *Latin* authors, and from the sacred scriptures, he adds, 'After all this I need make no farther comment; for no mortal can doubt but the passage in St. *Justin* ought to be rendered thus: several persons among us of sixty or seventy years of age, of both sexes, who have been trained up in the christian religion, or instructed in Christ from their childhood, do continue uncorrupted.'

Now this makes directly against our author. And this was thought to be the true and genuine sense of the passage by Mr. *Reeves*, a learned Pædo-baptist; who could not possibly be under the least bias to favour a practice, to the professors of which he was no friend, and so could only be induced to render it, as he has done, from an inward conviction, that this and no other was the true meaning of *Justin's* words, as appears in his translation of *Justin*, p. 35, 36. And I can produce abundance of both sexes, who have from their childhood been disciplined unto Christ, and lived in a constant course of spotless virginity to sixty or seventy years of

‘ of age ; and I cannot but glory in being able to produce so many instances of christian purity out of every nation.’

But our author, for ends best known to himself, makes the passage, which he quotes from the second apology, generally thought to be spurious, speak thus : ‘ Several persons among us, both men and women, of sixty or seventy years old, who were profelyted or made disciples to Christ in, or from, their infancy, do continue uncorrupt.’ Is it justifiable in any man thus to corrupt an author to serve a turn, to destroy the harmony of his works, and make him inconsistent with himself ; nay, to make him, a Saint, prevaricate, or deal insincerely with the greatest powers upon earth, for whose information this apology was professedly written, and under which he afterwards suffered martyrdom for the truth ? But, after all, what does the cause of our author get by his unfairness, when his own words are understood according to the true proper meaning of them ? For though he would from Dr. Wall suggest to his readers, that the persons St. *Justin* speaks of were baptized in their infancy, or soon after they were born ; yet his conscience seems to have been convinced, that the passage ought only to be rendered *from their infancy*, and therefore he uses that term three times, in three lines, and never uses the word *in* at all. But, as I said before, what good does it do his cause ? What is there in making St. *Justin* say, *I can produce several persons among us both men and women of sixty or seventy years old, who were profelyted (that is, converted to Christ) or made disciples (that is, they were taught and instructed in the christian principles) in or from their infancy or childhood, and do continue uncorrupt ?* ’Tis no more than St. *Paul* himself says of *Timothy*, *that from a child he had known the holy scriptures*. We may be satisfied therefore, that the words *childhood* or *infancy*, in their true and proper sense, had the same meaning then among the *Romans*, as they have now among us, and have had *time immemorial*, as all proceedings at law, where minors are concerned, do fully and plainly prove. For we have no reason to think, that the laws of the antients restrained infancy to a lower age, than our own ; or, that the wise *Romans*, from whom we derived many good laws and customs, permitted their youth to take possession of their inheritance sooner than we do. And the words of *Tertullian* strongly favour this, where he says, ‘ * That, according to every one’s condition, disposition and age too, ’tis most useful to delay baptism, especially to little children : indeed our Lord says, forbid them

‘ them not to come to me, therefore let them come when
 ‘ they grow up; let them come, when they learn what they
 ‘ are taught, whither they come; let them become christ-
 ‘ tians when they are able to know Christ, for why does
 ‘ that innocent age hasten to the remission of sins? Men act
 ‘ more cautiously in temporal affairs; for this is to commit
 ‘ divine treasure to such as are not intrusted with an earthly
 ‘ estate. Let them first know how to desire salvation, that
 ‘ you may appear to have given to him that asks.’

And if the words *childhood* and *infancy* had the same mean-
 ing in *Justin*’s time, as they have now amongst us, which I
 think we have sufficient reason to believe; then the true
 sense of the passage in *St. Justin* is, that he *knew several men
 and women of sixty or seventy years old, who were discipled or
 instructed and proselyted, that is converted to the christian re-
 ligion, from or before they were twenty-one years of age.* I my-
 self have known several instances of infants converted and
 baptized, upon profession of repentance, and faith, and reso-
 lutions to lead a holy and virtuous life at or before they were
 fourteen years of age. And if God should continue their
 lives, to the number of years which some attain, they may
 then be said to have been baptized into Christ, as long as our
 author would have us believe the persons were, which *St.*
Justin speaks of.

Besides, no Pædo-baptist pretends to argue against the
 common acceptation of the word *teach* in any other case;
 which clearly shews how very unfair and unjustifiable
 a thing it is for them to do it in this. Nay, *Dr. Ham-*
mond, in several of his works, expounds the commission ex-
 actly as we do; so that he therein flatly contradicts himself,
 when he would give the word a different turn, to serve the
 cause of infant baptism. Moreover, the sense, which some
 Pædo-baptists are for forcing upon the word *teach*, is
 utterly disowned by many others of the greatest learn-
 ing among them: such as *Cameron*, *Grotius*, *Rigaltius*,
Dr. Burnet the learned Bishop of *Sarum*, with others.
Dr. Whitby likewise, somewhat more largely, with his usual
 modesty and candour, corrects this mistake. ‘ *Μαθητεύειν*, says
 ‘ he, here is to preach the gospel to all nations, and to en-
 ‘ gage them to believe it, in order to the profession of that
 ‘ faith by baptism.’ This he goes on to confirm, and then
 adds, “ I desire any one to tell me how the apostles could
 “ *μαθητεύειν*, make a disciple of an heathen, or unbelieving
 “ *Ἰεω*, without being *μαθηταὶ* or teachers of them; whether
 “ they were not sent to preach to those that could hear, and

“ to teach them to whom they preached that Jesus was the
 “ Christ, and only to baptize them when they did believe
 “ this. This is so absolutely necessary in the nature of the
 “ thing, till a christian church among the heathens or the
 “ Jews was founded, and so expressly said by *Justin Martyr*
 “ to have been the practice in the first ages of the church, that
 “ to deny what is confirmed by such evidence of reason and
 “ church history, would be to prejudice a cause, which in
 “ my poor judgment needs not this interpretation of the
 “ word *μαθητεύειν*; nor needs it be asserted that infants are
 “ made disciples, any more than they are made believers by
 “ baptism,” &c.

These evidences, with a multitude more which might be added, were, I think, never answered; nor are they easily to be withstood by an impartial, unbiassed mind, which must see, that our opponents themselves have firmly established the true sense of the commission in our favour. And the following passages from St. *Justin's* apology, are as expressly against any such practice, as the words of any writer, who neither knew, nor ever heard of any such thing, can possibly be.

The design of the apology was to inform the Emperor and Senate of the principles and practices of the christian church; and the integrity, sincerity, and care of the pious martyr, not to hide any thing from them, appears as follows.

‘ LXXIX. I shall now lay before you the manner of dedicating ourselves to God, through Christ, upon our conversion; for should I omit this, I might seem not to deal sincerely in this account of the christian religion. As many therefore as are persuaded, and believe, that the things taught and said by us are true, and moreover take upon them to live accordingly, are taught to pray, and ask of God (with fasting) the forgiveness of their former sins; we praying together, and fasting for and with them, and then, and not till then, they are brought to a place of water, and there regenerated after the same manner with ourselves; for they are washed in the name of God the father, and Lord of all, and of our Saviour Jesus Christ; for Christ has said, unless you are born again you cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven, *John* iii. 3, 5. (But you all know it is impossible to enter a second time into our mother's womb) and in allusion to this, the Prophet *Isaiab*, in the words above cited, speaks, when he prescribes the method by which repenting sinners may avoid the consequence of their sins;’ — *Isa.* i. 16—20.

• LXXX. The reason of this we have from the apostles, for having nothing to do in our first birth, but being begotten by necessity, or without our own consent, and trained up also in vicious customs and company, to the end therefore we might continue no longer the children of necessity and ignorance, but of freedom and knowledge, and obtain remission of our past sins by virtue of this water, the penitent, who now makes his second birth an act of his own choice, has called over him the name of God the Father and Lord of all things. When we conduct the person to be baptized to the place of baptism, we call God by no other name; because we have not any appellation for the ineffable majesty of God, that can explain his nature; and if any man pretends to that, we think him mad in the highest degree; this baptism is called illumination, because the minds of the Catechumens who are thus washed were illuminated; and moreover the person baptized and illuminated, is baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, who was crucified under *Pontius Pilate*, and in the name of the Holy Ghost, who spake by the Prophets, and foretold every thing concerning Christ.

• LXXXV. After the believer is baptized, and so incorporated or made one with us, we lead him to the congregation of the brethren, as we call them, and then with great fervency pour out our souls in common prayers both for ourselves, for the person baptized, and for all others all the world over; that having embraced the truth, our conversation might be as becometh the gospel, and that we may be found doers of the word, and so at length be saved with an everlasting salvation. Prayers being over we salute each other with a kiss: after this, bread and a cup of wine and water are brought to the President or Bishop, which he takes, and offers up praise and glory to the Father of all things, through the name of his Son and the Holy Spirit, &c.

• LXXXVI. The food we call the eucharist, of which none are allowed to be partakers, but such only as are true believers, and have been baptized in the laver of regeneration for the remission of sins, and live according to Christ's precepts; for we do not take this as common bread, and common wine.

These passages are, I think, an unanswerable proof, that *St. Justin* was absolutely and utterly a stranger to infant baptism, and had never so much as heard of any such thing.

And

And as our author says, p. 42. ‘ Whether infants were or
 ‘ were not then baptized, was so notorious and plain a fact,
 ‘ a fact of so publick and conspicuous a nature, as could not
 ‘ possibly escape the knowledge of every particular christian,
 ‘ then living upon earth;’ much less could it escape the
 knowledge of so eminent an advocate for the christians, as
 St. *Justin* was. And as it plainly appears from his apology,
 that he had no knowledge of it, we must necessarily con-
 clude, that there was no such practice in ‘ *the christian*
 ‘ *church in its purest and first ages; the ages immediately suc-*
 ‘ *ceeding the apostles; who could not but know what the apo-*
 ‘ *stolic doctrine and practice was as to this matter:*’ no, nor
 till after the middle of the second century, notwithstanding
 the assurance, with which our author asserts, that *the baptism*
of infants was the undoubted practice of the christian church in
those purest and first ages. And if it was not the practice of
 the christian church, till after the middle of the second cen-
 tury, at the earliest; it can never be the duty of christians
 in any age, supposing it to have crept into the christian church
 ever so soon afterwards: for that, which was not appointed
 by Christ himself, nor practised by his apostles, nor found
 in any of their writings, is not old enough to be true,
 nor at all binding upon christians. Nay, St. *Paul* has
 taken such care to secure the truth, and prevent the
 church from admitting any lower authority, that he ex-
 horts us to reject not only himself, but even *an angel from*
heaven, if he *preached any other gospel than he at first*
preached to the Galatians, ch. i. 6—9. What therefore
 can we have to do with ten thousand such authorities, as are
 contrary to the practice of the apostles of our Lord, but to
 reject them, with abhorrence and detestation, and especially
 such, as come two or three hundred years after their times?

Nevertheless, the manner, in which this controversy has
 been managed by such, as are bigots to infant baptism, for
 which our author pretends apostolick tradition, fully verifies
 the truth of what Dr. *Wright* says, ‘ Upon this principle,
 ‘ every new council begins a new set of traditions: and by
 ‘ thus contradicting and leaving the scripture, men of learn-
 ‘ ing are led into endless mazes, and the most dishonest arts;
 ‘ and the poor laity in common life are subject to perpetual
 ‘ tyranny, and to have new yokes of bondage put upon
 ‘ them in every age.’ *

I shall only add a word or two more to what our author
 says about the prevailing or spread of infant baptism in the
 church

* Sermon on scripture and tradition, p. 50.

church, on which subject he brings in these words, *p. 45*:
 ‘ Strange ! beyond all belief ! that amidst their many mutual
 ‘ accusations, reproaches, complaints, we meet not, in all
 ‘ antiquity, with one upon this head ; and not a man, ca-
 ‘ tholic or heretic, dropping a single word against this gross
 ‘ innovation ; except perhaps, *Tertullian* ; and he not ab-
 ‘ solutely, (if at all) censuring it ; and supporting his dislike
 ‘ of it, by reasons which are no strength, but dishonour to any
 ‘ cause.’

To deny that *Tertullian* censured infant baptism, and in the very words immediately before, and after, to own, that he disliked and wrote against it, is no small contradiction. Whether his reasons have any strength or force in them, the reader may judge by the passage recited, *p. 97*. The practice itself is justly supposed to have begun first near *Carthage* in *Africa*, upon mistaking the true sense of *John* iii. 5 ; whence it was imagined, that none could be saved, or could ever enter into the kingdom of glory, if they were not baptized ; and hence the tender and anxious concern of weak parents for the eternal happiness of their children gave birth to infant baptism : and upon a like gross mistake of *John* vi. 53, they brought them also to the communion. But infant baptism no sooner appeared in the world, than it was opposed and censured by *Tertullian*, the only writer of any note in that age, and in that part of the world, whose works are preserved. He made use of just and substantial reasons against it, but the love of novelty and fond affection, which work most powerfully in dark and weak minds, were not to be restrained even by a writer of *Tertullian*’s rank and abilities ; especially when we consider, that their ministers might be too subject to humour the weakness, and sooth the foibles of such, as were benefactors to them. Thus we may presume it was cherished, and gathered votaries by little and little, till the metropolis of the world received it, and from thence it spread apace, but not without a man catholic, or heretic, dropping a single word against this gross innovation, as our author pretends. For *Nazianzen*, a good while after *Tertullian*, in his oration *εἰς τὴν βαπτισμῶν*, dislikes it too, and would not have infants brought to baptism, till they were of some age, and able to answer for themselves. The sixth canon of the council of *Neocesarea* is no way favourable to infant baptism, but directly against any such practice ; where it says, in order for baptism, the proper choice of each person should be discovered, and that by a profession. Nor was the present practice so thoroughly established in *Cyprian*’s time, but that *Magnus*, a Bishop, doubted of its validity, in some re-

spect,

spect, as appears from Lord *King's* inquiry. These are specimens of the general opposition, which we have reason to believe it met with at first; and we have more reason to wonder, that we have any of these left upon record, than that we have no more of them, when we consider the wicked practice of interpolating and curtailings, which prevailed in the 4th and 5th centuries, among *the fathers of the church*, as they are styled; who were so far from being afraid or ashamed to conceal and destroy what they disliked in the books of the anti-ent writers for christianity, that they even altered and added to their works, that so nothing might appear therein, but what was favourable to the corrupt principles and practices, which they themselves had run into. And in this pernicious practice they seem to have gloried, and strove to outdo one another for the service of the church. This is so clearly, and so fully confessed by *Jerome* himself, that no reader can doubt the villany of some in that age; but must from thence see the greatest cause to lament the loss of the most valuable monuments of christian truth and purity, written in the first and purest ages of the church. Hear, says Mr. *Whiston*, *Jerome's* own words.

‘ If then I have translated what is good [out of *Origen*]
 ‘ and have either cut off, or corrected, or concealed what
 ‘ is bad, why am I blamed? While the *Latins* have
 ‘ what is good in him, and are unacquainted with what is
 ‘ bad. If this be a crime, let *Hilary* the confessor be re-
 ‘ proved, who translated the exposition of the *Psalms*, and
 ‘ the Homilies upon *Job* out of his books, that is out of
 ‘ *Greek* into *Latin*. Let *Eusebius*, Bishop of *Vercellæ*, who
 ‘ was a confessor with him, be esteemed in fault also, who
 ‘ translated the commentaries of an heretick [*Eusebius* of
 ‘ *Cæsarea*] into our language; although he omitted what was
 ‘ heretical, and translated all that was really good. I say no-
 ‘ thing of *Victorinus* of *Poictiers*, and the rest, who followed
 ‘ *Origen* in his exposition of the scriptures, and expressed
 ‘ their meaning of the text only; lest I should appear not
 ‘ so much to vindicate myself, as to seek out partners of my
 ‘ crime. *Advers. Vigilantium*. And in his third apology a-
 ‘ gainst *Ruffinus*. Let us leave off to patronise hereticks,
 ‘ and there will be no contention between us. With the
 ‘ same fervour with which we formerly commended *Origen*,
 ‘ now that he is condemned by all the world, let us condemn
 ‘ him, let us join our hands and hearts, and follow our east-
 ‘ ern and western leaders (the Bishops of *Alexandria* and
 ‘ *Rome*) with chearful steps. If we erred when we were
 ‘ young, let us amend now we are old.’

Hence

Hence we see what was the avowed practice of the fathers of the church in that corrupt age, and therefore have no reason to wonder, that we have so little left upon record of all the writings of the primitive christians, which were in any thing contrary to the corrupt principles and practices of those times. For when the Bishops of *Alexandria* and *Rome* had set up themselves for heads and guides to the church, they took care, upon the death of a Bishop, to fill up his place from amongst the Monks, who were their own creatures, waiting for promotion; and thereby had a fair opportunity to establish whatever corruptions they themselves had run into. To prevent detection and opposition, they took care to destroy, or else corrupt, all the writings, which were contrary to what they approved; so that of the numerous books written and published by *Origen*, the greatest scholar in his day, there are comparatively few or none of the originals to be found; nor is there any thing to discover what his sentiments were, upon many points, but only from the corrupt translations of such unworthy men, with some occasional references, or quotations, perhaps subject to the same unfairness. And to use our author's own words upon this point, p. 31. 'If any think it strange that we have no more express testimonies against (he says to) this practice of the church in the writings of these fathers, let him consider, that the far greater part of their writings are lost; and that it is but little more than their names, and a few pieces of their works, especially as to the first age, that are transmitted down to us.' This argument must surely conclude much more strongly against infant baptism than for it, because, our author will not allow the opposers of that practice to be numerous enough, or to have power sufficient, in any age, to ingross all the writings for it, and so to destroy them, in order to obscure the truth: nor could their doing so answer that end, whilst he supposes it was *the undoubted practice of the christian church, in its purest and first ages, throughout the whole world.* On the contrary, when the favourers of infant baptism obtained all the power in the world, as they had corrupted and changed Christ's ordinance for their own inventions, they had power, and were under very strong temptations, to alter or destroy every thing, that appeared in the antient writings against them (which we have seen was the avowed practice of some,) but at the same time they would undoubtedly be very careful to preserve, and set out in the strongest terms they could every thing that was favourable to their cause. And therefore, since nothing of this kind is to be found in the writ-

writings of the first ages, it only proves that, in the purest ages of the church, there was no such practice. Besides which, if these writings were lost, as our author pretends, it must then follow, that, for aught he, or any other person can possibly know to the contrary, they might contain *express testimonies* against infant baptism, instead of for it.

Upon the whole then, what I have observed is, I think, sufficient to take off the force of all, which our author says in about twenty pages on his fifth argument, from apostolic tradition, from the general spread of the practice he pleads for, and the little opposition he pretends there was made against it. And now, having already multiplied pages, far beyond my first intention, I shall add no more; but leave the worthy gentleman, who occasioned our author's publication, to answer whatever else there is in it, which deserves the least regard. And I hope he will excuse my anticipating his labour, by what I have here done, which I presume will rather ease than increase his trouble. For what Dr. Doddridge says of the writings for infidelity, is justly applicable to the writings in favour of infant baptism: 'Sad indeed is the drudgery our brethren must go through in reading such authors — but the confirmation which their faith may receive, by the very efforts made to overthrow it, will, I hope, in many instances, be a sufficient reward. And as these pieces, especially in the hands of second rate writers, contain little more than a confident and unwearied repetition of the same objections, which have been answered perhaps many scores and hundreds of times, without taking any notice of *the* replies; — so when they accidentally start up in *their* way, *they* will soon see, that many of them are grounded on notorious falsehood, and are in themselves despicably mean; especially when set against the great arguments for it, of which *they* are already possessed *.'

* First lett. to christianity not founded on arg. p. 46, 47, 21, 22.

F I N I S.

ADVERTISEMENT.

Written by the same AUTHOR;

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N. B. This Appendix may be had separate from the Supplement.

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2. REMARKS on the several Answers to the Pamphlet, intitled, *Christianity not founded on Argument*;

With an APPENDIX, intitled, The NECESSITY of BAPTISM, in order to Church Membership and Christian Communion, shewn from CHRIST'S OWN Words, *John iii. 3, 5*. In two Letters to A LEARNED DIVINE.

